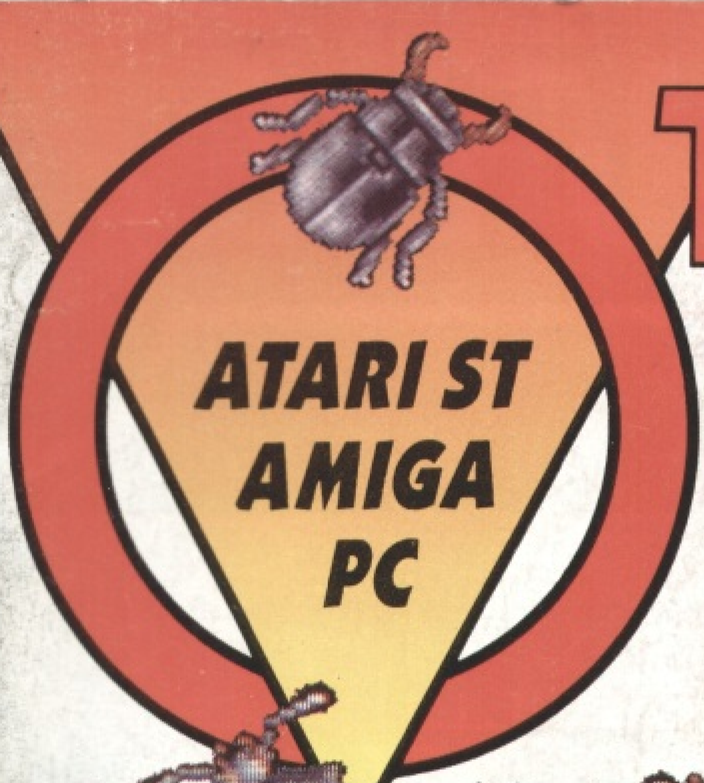


AUGUST 1989
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RAINBOW ISLANDS SWEET SUCCESS

FOR 16-BIT

XENON II MEGABLAST!



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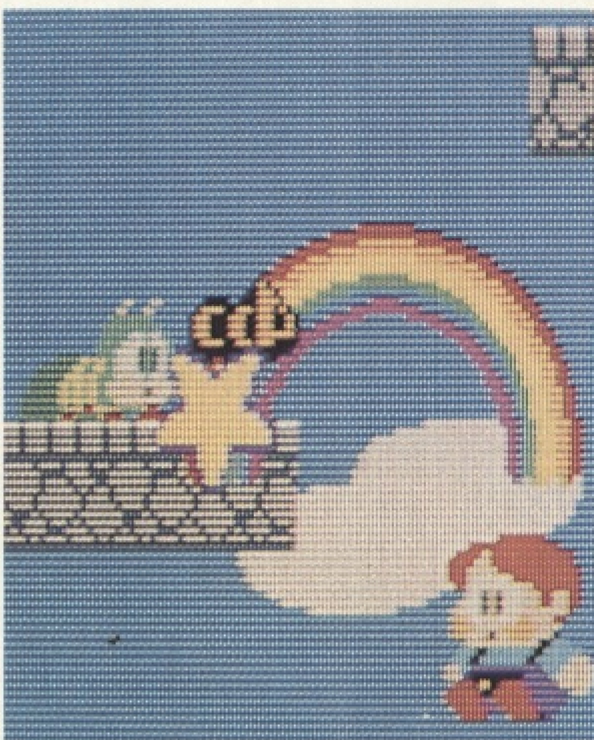
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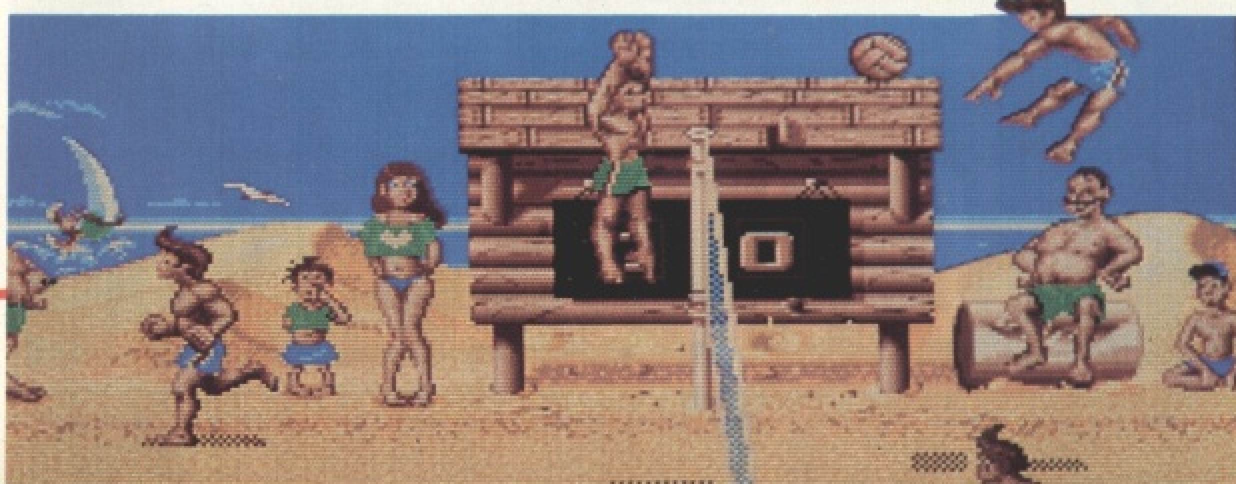
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A Big Tarby 'From The Heart' Noseriouslythankyouverymuch To: British Rail.

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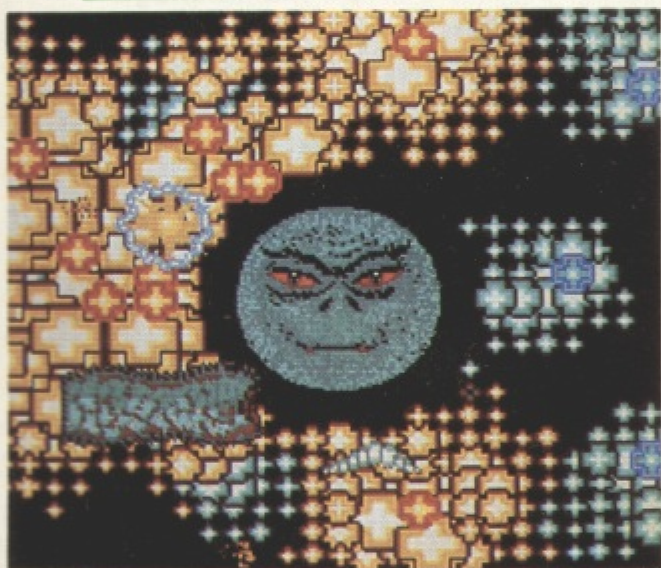






TENTS







THE ONE'S GUIDE TO PRICE, RELEASE DATE AND EVERYTHING

You may be used to reading reams of opinionated waffle elsewhere, but here we prefer to let the games speak for themselves. Relevant scenes are shown, with informative captions used to convey the 'feel' of the game in question. At the end of each review there are opinions highlighting any good and bad points, prices, release dates, and ratings where possible. Basically, there's something for everyone – at best a review, and at worst a highly detailed preview. There's nothing clever, just straightforward facts and ratings. Updates will follow where appropriate.

And now the ratings...

GRAPHICS Not necessarily how colourful or well drawn they are, but how well they fit in to the overall effect.
SOUND Again, not necessarily quantity or indeed quality of sound, but how well it's used.
PLAYABILITY How does the game feel? Is it addictive or just plain uninteresting.
VALUE Essentially a reflection of lasting interest – how much game you get for your money.
OVERALL A useful point of reference – essentially a summary of the preceeding ratings.

THIS MONTH'S HOT HIPSTERS

GARY PENN
Rainbow Islands and **Xenon II: Megablast** get the thumbs up from t'Ed.

CIARÁN BRENNAN
Twice **Kick Off** League Champion and man at C&A Ciarán's tastes are many and varied. A Pringle jumper and **Grand Prix Circuit** recently got his pulse racing.

BRIAN NESBITT
The self-confessed homosapien likes people and computer games. Bri's tips for the top are **Xenon II: Megablast** and **Stunt Car Racer,** which he reckons you can expect to see disking their way up the charts in the near future.

GARY WHITTA
Wiley Whitta wevels in weally wacey wares, leaning more towards the arcade style of game. **Rainbow Islands** and **Quartz** hit the spot this month.

KATI HAMZA
The former ZZAP! Assistant Editor likes her software like her men... hard, fast, playable shoot 'em ups and sporty simulations. **Kick Off** and **Xybots** are still tickling her fancy.

STEVE COOKE
ACE's Editor prefers to put his mental reflexes to the test with such taxing text teasers as the Infocom range of interactive fiction.

LETTERS

LETTERS, The One, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

MEMORY SCANNERS

Dear Sir,
I'm an avid reader of most Amiga magazines, and on reading the write-ups and reviews of **Time Scanner** I decided to go ahead and buy it. However, after getting home I found that it did not load and returned the disk to Activision.

Following a telephone conversation on June 13th, my wife was informed that **Time Scanner** is a 1Mb game and will not load on a standard Amiga A500.

A hunt through all of my recent magazines revealed no report of this at all. Following another telephone conversation I was told, and I quote: "we only found out last Thursday (June 8th)." How can anyone who produces games not know whether or not they are 1Mb-only until after they are in the shops?

S Brown, New Addington, Surrey.

*Activision's software development manager, Charles Cecil, has this to say on the subject: "firstly, I fully understand your annoyance at not being able to load **Time Scanner**. Your letter, however, contains some inaccuracies that do not reflect the overall situation. **Time Scanner** will load on all pre 1.3 Kick Start Amigas, regardless of memory. When the product was released, we were not aware of any changes that Commodore were to make to the Amiga. It was only when the Amiga 1.3 entered distribution that the problem was discovered. Commodore has never publicly admitted that there are significant changes to the operating system. It was only on June 13th, as stated, that we discovered that the new model had a slightly reduced RAM availability. In the case of **Time Scanner**, the code is fully packed into RAM, and so the reduced RAM capability of the new Amigas causes the game to crash. With a 1Mb expansion, the extra memory is made available again, allowing the game to run. Had we had any advance warning of the changes from Commodore, then this situation would not have arisen. I would like to offer our apologies to all those who have experienced incompatibility problems with **Time Scanner**, and can assure you that all future titles will be fully compatible with the new system."*

'TITES COME DOWN

Dear The One,
You made a mistake in Issue 10 on page 22 to be precise. Stalactites can not fall from a ceiling, so surely you must mean stalagmites.

Ben Williams, Bradmore, Pennfields.

Nobody likes a smartarse – especially one who doesn't get his facts straight. Collins' dictionary describes a stalactite as 'a cylindrical mass of calcium carbonate hanging from the roof of a limestone cave'. Anyone else fancy their chances?

AFFAIRS OF THE HEART

Dear Sir,
Further to Phil South's Grafix article in the July issue, in which he pays tribute to Eadweard Muybridge's pre-conflake activities, I felt the following lesser-known part of Muybridge's life worthy of mention.

Muybridge, having married in his early forties, discovered through letters sent to his wife, Flora, that she had a lover, one Colonel Larkyns.

On October 17th 1874, Muybridge sought out Colonel Larkyns at the Yellow Jacket silver mines not far from San Fransisco. He greeted the Colonel with the words: "Good evening Major, my name is Muybridge and here is the answer to the letter that you sent my wife." Mybridge then shot Larkyns, killing him on the spot.

The subsequent trial in San Fransisco was international news, as Muybridge was by then quite well known. In the end he was acquitted and subsequently raised Larkyn's child (borne by his wife) after his wife's death a few years later.

This almost totally useless piece of information was lifted from the sleeve notes of Philip Glass' excellent album, The Photographer, which is far more enjoyable to listen to than the dreadful 'meep meep' noises made by my Atari.

Mark Pierce, Northwood Hills, Middlesex.

You never know what kind of a Pandora's box you'll open by stating a couple of seemingly innocuous facts in these pages. By the way, does anyone know anything about the life and times of Vincent Van Gogh?

FANCY A SPIN?

Dear Sir,
I am writing about the review of **Test Drive II** featured in the June issue. Both PC and Amiga versions were catered for in the review, but what about the ST? Is there no ST version, and if so why not? The game is easily within the computer's capabilities, so is this brilliant game never going to grace the screens for ST owners?

Tom Williams, Milton Keynes, Bucks.

*Sincerest apologies Tom, the lack of an ST panel in that review was an unforgiveable error, but it could also have been a blessing in disguise... since that issue went to press, we have been informed by Accolade (the **Test Drive** people) that all future product will be developed for the ST – albeit slightly behind the Amiga and PC. See this issue's **Grand Prix Circuit** review (page 68) for further details.*

OUT FOR BLOOD

Dear The One,
Congratulations on producing an interesting and professional looking magazine. I think that your balance between screen-shots and text is just right and that most of your features are great – especially the Work In Progress.

However, I do have one small complaint. I think that **Blood Money** (June Issue) was severely underrated, and to make matters worse, the review had no colour, giving the game a dull appearance.

I know that reviewing is a matter of personal taste, but there is no excuse for giving the best Amiga shoot 'em up to date a measly score of 74%. Perhaps Mr Whitta should stick to flight simulations?

I don't mean to be rude, but if I had not bought **Blood Money** before reading your review I would have missed a great game. Could you please let DMA design know that somebody out there actually liked their game.

Carsten Brandt, Roskilde, Denmark.

*You're being a little hard on Mr Whitta, I'm afraid, because although he did actually review the game, the Overall rating was a result of a group decision (as all rating in **The One** are). No matter how hard we try, there's no way that we can agree with everyone's tastes all of the time – but hopefully we get it right more often than we get it wrong.*

ARCADE RATES?

Dear The One,
I think yours is a great mag but I have one or two points to make about it.

1) Why not have a percentage rating in your arcade section like **C+VG**? This makes it easier to read at a glance.
2) Why was there no review of the release of that great game **Dragon Ninja?**
3) Are we going to see some freebies in the future (posters maybe)?

Keep up the good work.

Paul Scally, Penicuik Scotland.

Right... we don't rate arcade games for a couple of ratings: firstly, we generally don't play coin-ops for as long as we play other computer games, so for that reason it would be unfair to try to make comparisons – also, it only takes a few pence for you to find out for yourself if you like an arcade machine or not, so what do you need a rating for? On your other points, it's impossible for us to review every single product released in a month (although we do at least try to keep you informed of all releases) and yes there will be more freebies coming your way in the very near future.

WEIRD DREAMS

Weird (adj)

1. Suggestive of or relating to the supernatural, eerie. 2. Strange or bizarre. 3. Archaic of or relating to fate or the Fates.

Dream (n)

1. Mental activity, usually in the form of an imagined series of events, occuring during certain phases of sleep. 2. An image of fantasy. 3. A cherished hope; ambition; aspiration. 4. A vain hope.

Weird Dreams (n)

Your only hope.

Dare you fall asleep?

Weird Dreams is available from all good software stores now. Commodore Amiga, Atari ST, and IBM price £24.99. Commodore 64 price £14.99





Co-conception: Herman Serrano and Tony King Co-design: Herman Serrano, James Hutchby and Tony King.
UNIT 1, HAMPTON ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, TETBURY, GLOS. TEL: 0666 504326.



NEWS

• C'est la vie: the French are revolting!
• Stange goings on in Silly World!

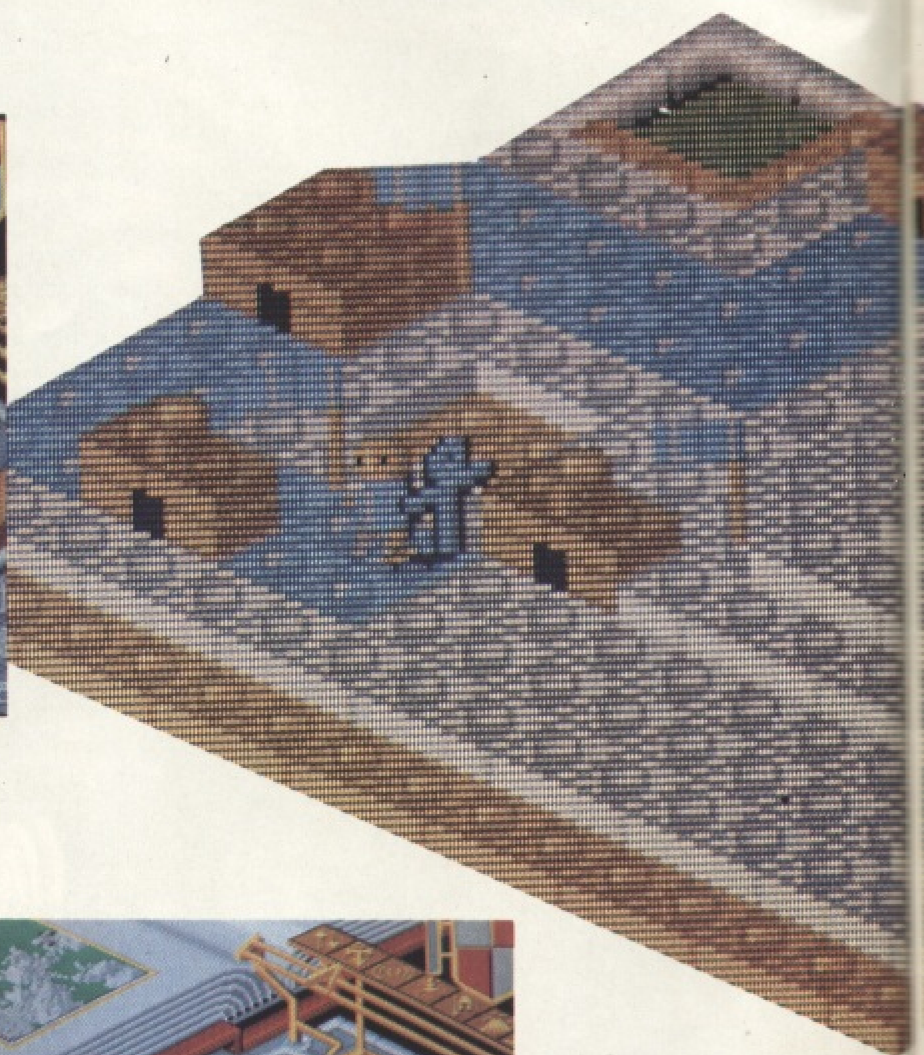
POPULOUS EXPANDS

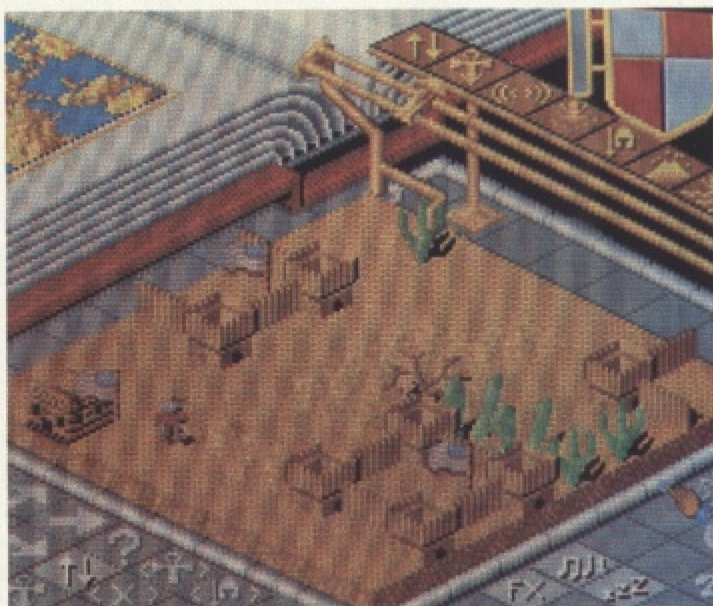
FIRST mentioned way back in Issue Five, the expansion pack for Electronic Arts' classic **Populous** will be released next month. Fittingly entitled **Populous: The Promised Lands**, the expansion pack takes the form of a data disk which is loaded into the original program in the same way as a saved game would be.

The Promised Lands is effectively a new Conquest game. Bullfrog Productions has put together another 500 worlds to conquer, spanning five new types of terrain. In addition the computer intelligence has been beefed up, and since the characters now behave differently depending on the landscape they populate, there's even more need for forward planning and strategic thought.

Populous: The Promised Lands will be available on a single disk which loads on both the ST and Amiga and costs £9.99. Could this be the first of a series of expansion packs? "Possibly", says Bullfrog boss Peter Molyneux, "but we won't be doing any more just yet – we're too busy with **Populous II**." We wait with bated breath...

Lego fans will feel at home in Block Land, a world where the landscape and all its inhabitants are made from toy bricks. The idea was inspired by Bullfrog's method of 'testing' their landscapes by mapping them out in Lego.





Saddle up pardner and indulge in a bit of rootin' tootin' divine intervention in the Wild West. Here Cowboys fight it out with the Injuns for supremacy. In this landscape the conventional Knights have been replaced on the Indian side by a mad chief who massacares cowboys with his tomahawk, while the cowboys send out the Lone Ranger!

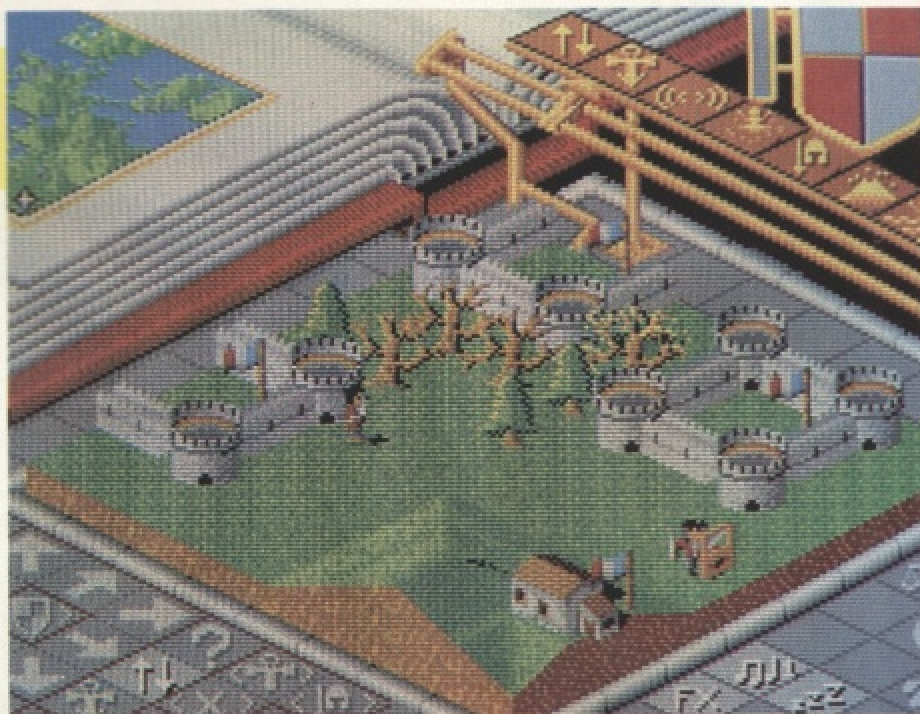


The Bit Plains – an entire world made from computer listing paper. Everything here is computer-orientated – even the houses. Players start out living in a menial calculator, and as you expand, the settlements upgrade to a PC, Amiga, Macintosh and finally a huge Cray XMP Mainframe!

STRIDE ON

Leap into a Russian future tovarich, with US Gold's 16-bit conversions of CapCom's blockbusting Strider. **Tiertex is handling the project and is confident that this will be its most successful conversion to date. Both ST and Amiga versions are due for release in October, so expect to see them at this year's PC Show.**

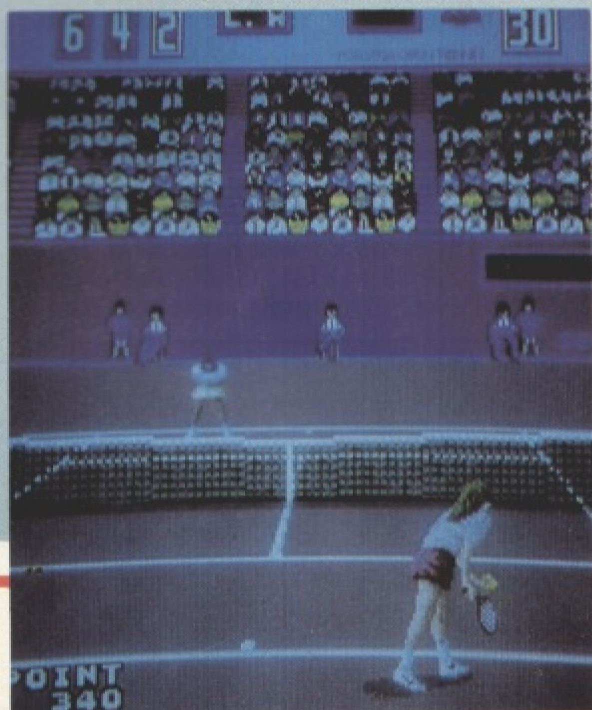




Specially included to coincide with the 200th Anniversary of the great event, Revolution Francaise pits the French peasants against the might of the aristocracy in a struggle for freedom. Watch out for the pavement cafe's, windmills, guillotines and onion sellers!



Silly Land! Here the inhabitants of this whacky Sentinel-like chequerboard world sport huge out-of-proportion potato heads whose expressions change, depending on how the conquest is going. And nothing is what it seems – many of the game's algorithms have been turned on their heads, so, among other things, your population decreases while in settle mode. Weeeiiirrd!!!



ANYONE FOR TENNIS

Completely failing to coincide with Wimbledon as it was orignally intended, Image Works' conversion of Sega's Tennis simulation *Passing Shot* will hit the streets next month. Teque Software (the team behind *Blasteroids*) is producing the ST and Amiga versions, priced at £19.99 and £24.99 respectively.

TOP TEN

(Month Ending July '89)

AMIGA

Pos	Last	Title
1	NE	MILLENIUM 2.2 (Electric Dreams)
2	10	SILKWORM (Virgin)
3	NE	GUNSHIP (Microprose)
4	1	POPULOUS (Electronic Arts)
5	NE	FORGOTTEN WORLDS (US Gold/CapCom)
6	4	KICK OFF (Anco)
7	5	LORDS OF THE RISING SUN (Cinemaware/Mirrorsoft)
8	9	SWORD OF SODAN (Discovery)
9	8	TEST DRIVE II (Accolade)
10	2	BLOOD MONEY (Psygnosis)

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Chart success for US Gold's conversion of Forgotten Worlds.

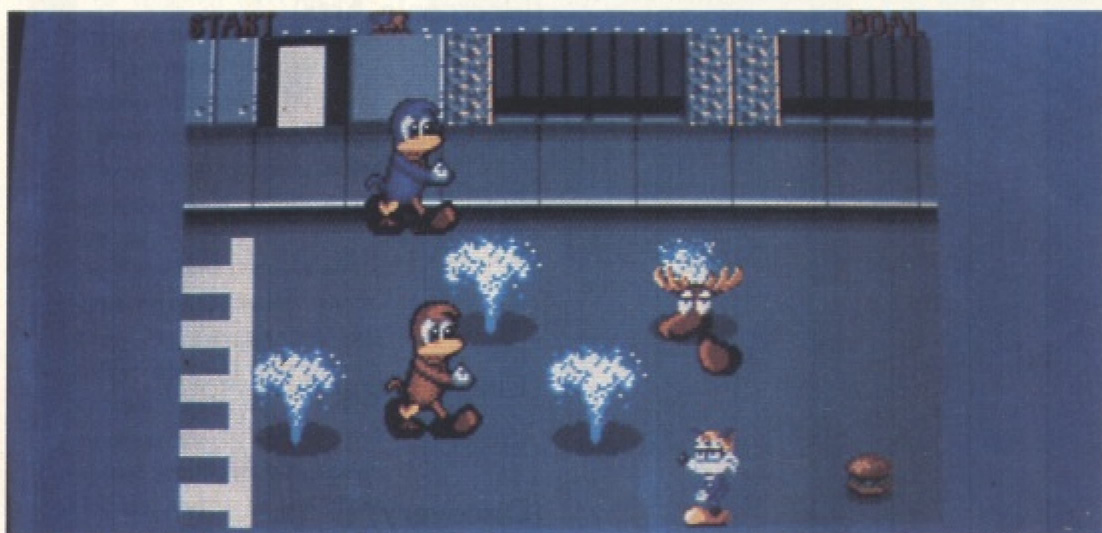


NEWS



Heeerre's Tom-Tom! First seen back in the Summer of '87, Wonderboy is back for more – and this time he's Super, with more power-ups and enemies than ever before.

THE DUX STOPS HERE



Our feathered hero Pin patrols the moose-ridden streets torching all and sundry in the ST version of Dynamite Dux.

Coming from Activision this September is the first of the company's long-promised Sega coin-op conversions – **Dynamite Dux.** The14-strong Core Design team (the people behind **Rick Dangerous**) is handling the project, with new recruit Robert Toone in charge of the ST and Amiga versions.

Robert produced the conversion from a combination of videos of the coin-op and the coin-op itself, and had to sket the graphics virtually from memory, as the coin-op isn't fitted with a pause mode! A PC version is also in the pipeline, but Core won't be handling that – it's currently under development in Activision's US offices.

Activition's next Sega licence will be **Super Wonderboy,** (subtitled Wonderboy in Monsterland). It's the second of Activision's **WonderBoy** licences (the original appeared back in 1987 but only on 8-bit formats) and promises an upgraded and improved version of the original, with 11 levels, bundles of extra weapons and potions and more cute nasties than you can poke a sherbet dib-dab at. ST and Amiga versions are both set to appear in September.



INDY-SCRIBABLE

The first of US Gold's two Indiana Jones games is now in the shops – the action game, programmed by Tiertex is a platforms 'n' ladders romp set over four levels, with Indy out to recover the priceless Holy Grail while rescuing his dad and beating off hordes of Nazis in the process. Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade is priced at £19.99 for both ST and Amiga.

TOP TEN

(Month Ending July '89)

ATARI ST



Test Drive II roars in to Number 5.

1	NE	MILLENIUM 2.2 (Electric Dreams)
2	10	KINGS QUEST TRIPLE PACK (Sierra/Activision)
3	2	ROBOCOP (Ocean)
4	NE	BATTLE CHESS (Electronic Arts)
5	NE	RVF (MicroStyle)
6	NE	KICK OFF (Anco)
7	1	POPULOUS (Electronic Arts)
8	NE	FORGOTTEN WORLDS (US Gold)
9	3	DRAGON NINJA (Imagine)
10	6	SILKWORM (Virgin)

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WHROOM!

ELECTRONIC ARTS™



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– the complete Grand Prix racing game.
"The game has gone a long way towards recreating the atmosphere of Grand Prix racing and as a result, it's undoubtedly the most realistic yet. In short Ferrari Formula One is a masterpiece of a program which no Amiga owner should be without"
The Games Machine.

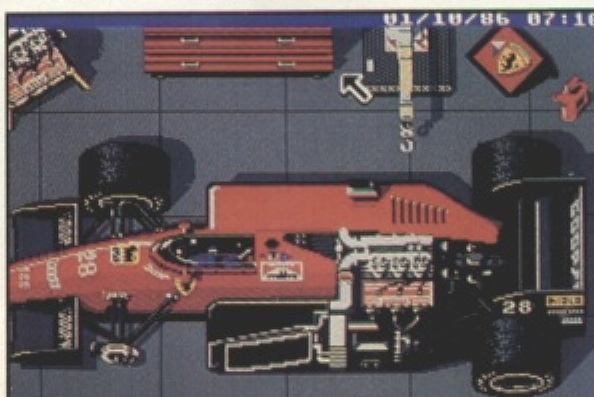
Now available on ST, Amiga (£24.99) and PC (£29.99 – 5.25 & 3.5).

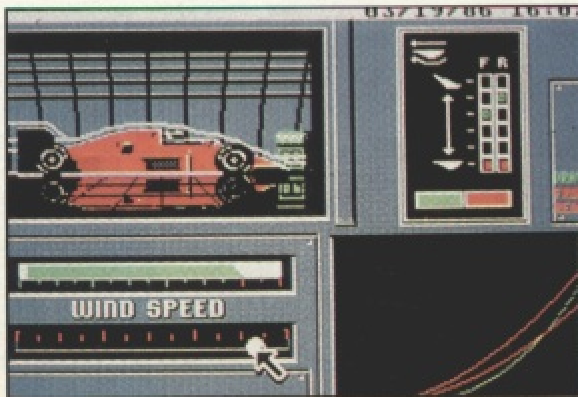
Commodore 64, Spectrum and Amstrad cassette and disk versions to follow.

To order direct, send the correct money (prices include postage and packing) to ELECTRONIC ARTS, DEPT FCS, THE LANGLEY BUSINESS CENTRE, 11-49 STATION RD, LANGLEY, BERKS, SL3 8YN
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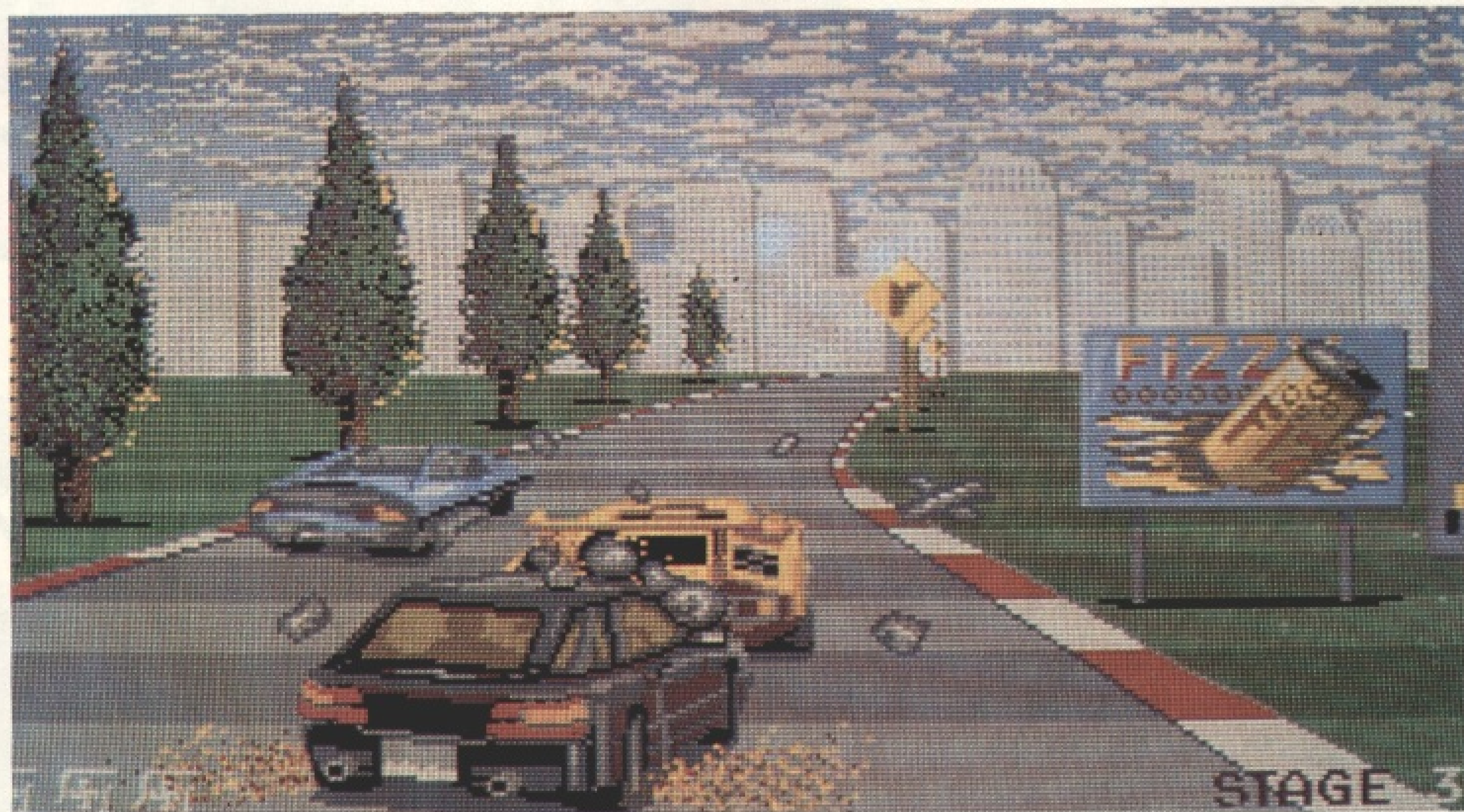




Screenshots represent the ST and PC versions, other versions may vary.

NEWS

● *Ocean takes to the skies!*
● *Flight simulator fights back!*
● *Taito takes to the streets!*
● *Asterix artist draws sword!*



THE CHASE IS ON

GO, **MISTER** Driver! The 16-bit conversions of Taito's block-busting race 'n' ram coin-op **Chase HQ** are slowly but surely taking shape at Ocean's Manchester offices. A mysterious programming duo is currently coding the project, which is due for release in November and should look practically indistinguishable from the original – as well as sporting some of the coin-op's sampled speech.

Also due out in November, but perhaps even more promising, is Ocean's forthcoming flight simulation, **Retaliator F-29**. Retaliator is based around future US Air Force technology, featuring planes (such as the fabled F-29) that aren't expected to be in service until the early 21st Century! Programming team Digital Image Design has spent six months in the states researching current Air Force technology to ensure accuracy.

Retaliator's wide range of missions are flown over a totally interactive world (a feature pioneered by the **Falcon Mission Disk**) with tanks, planes and other enemy vehicles all doing their own thing – which usually means trying to blow you out of the sky.

Staying with Ocean, but crossing the channel, the company's French programming arm is a bout to invade these shores with a flurry of product. The nine-man programming team behind the Christmas '89 smash **Operation Wolf** has just completed its first original game, **Ocean's Beach Volley** (reviewed on page 34), and judging by the line-up for the year ahead, these garcons won't be one-hit wonders.

Coming in August are the conversions of Konami's two-player coin-op shoot 'em up, **Cabal**, followed by the second in the series of Adidas sponsored sports games – **Golden Shoe**. This soccer game is based on the famed Golden Shoe award, presented to the most outstanding player of the year. In the past Lineker, Rush and Maradona have all won the coveted title, and in Golden Shoe your task is to do the same.



Ivanhoe's quest leads to the lair of his arch enemy – the dark wizard.

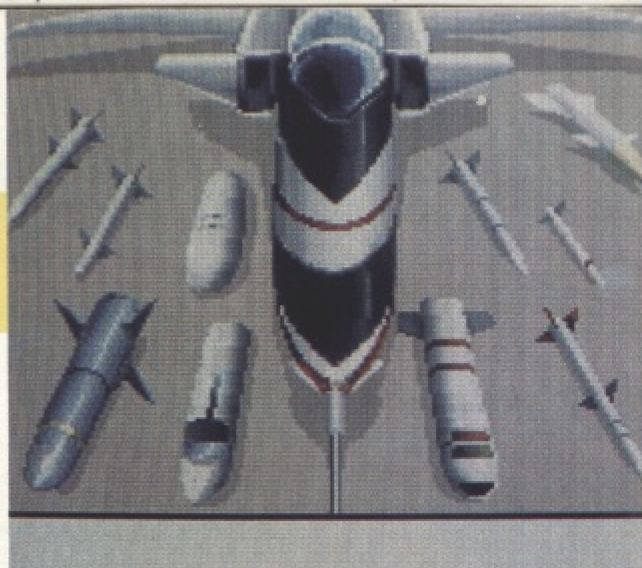
Retaliator's rear view boasts an interesting graphic effect. The pilot's head sways from side to side as the plane banks and rolls!

AGS features a birds-eye viewpoint as seen in **Kick Off** and **Microprose Soccer**, and promises the largest sprites ever seen in a sports simulation. ST and Amiga owners can dust off their shin pads in October.



A LOAD OF...

Rainbow Arts' latest is Spherical, a 'tribute' (ahem!) to Temco's immensely popular coin-op, Solomon's Key. Spherical casts you as an ageing sorceror guiding a magical sphere through over a hundred levels. The quest begins on the ST this month at £19.99, with Amiga and PC versions to follow in August at the same price.



"More! Push it more!" This ST version of Chase HQ looks remarkably like the coin-op original, but you'll have to wait until late November to see if the classic gameplay has been captured.

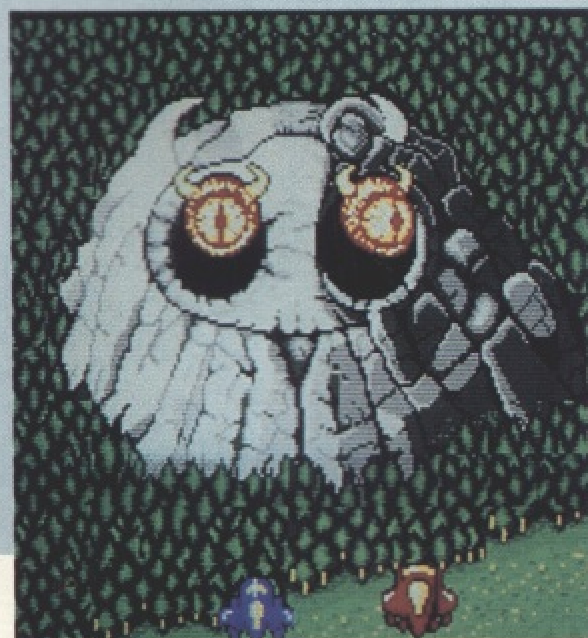
A selection of the F-29's 21st Century killing technology.



Try out some futuristic airborne hardware – even before the air force does – in Retaliator F-29.

And finally, there's the piece de resistance. For the last nine months the team has been beavering away on **Ivanhoe**, a multi-level mix of arcade action and swords 'n' sorcery with graphics provided by an ex-cartoon animator who was part-responsible for many of the Asterix movies!





TWIN WINGS

Virgin's Gemini Wing is a vertically scrolling progressive shoot 'em up played over seven organic levels. One or two players can face all manner of 'living' enemies, including mutated butterflies and giant flying salmon! Imagitec Design is behind the ST and Amiga versions due for release in late August at £19.99. Sadly, no PC version is planned.

TOP TEN

(Month Ending July '89)

IBM PC AND COMPATIBLES

Position	Last month	Title
1	1	JET FIGHTER (Velocity/Paperlogic)
2	8	688 ATTACK SUB (Electronic Arts)
3	2	KINGS QUEST TRIPLE PACK (Sierra/Activision)
4	7	F-16 COMBAT PILOT (Digital Integration)
5	NE	TEST DRIVE II (Accolade)
6	NE	LOMBARD RAC (Mandarin)
7	10	OUT RUN (US Gold)
8	8	SENTINEL WORLDS (Electronic Arts)
9	RE	KING'S QUEST IV (Sierra/Activision)
10	9	SPACE QUEST III (Sierra/Activision)

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MicroStyle's RVF – 'Honda' way to the top.

NEWS

● *A blaster made for two!*
● *Football gets the boot!*

Tear down those walls in the ST conversion of Konami's blastastic Cabal.



Ivanhoe's quest involves battling swordsmen and archers on foot or horseback, and there's also a mystical element provided by spell-casting demons and sorcerors that pop up along the way.

Ivanhoe is released in October on the ST and Amiga. But in the meantime, check out a little of the game's animation (in spectacular 'One-O-Vision') by flicking through the top left corners of the pages at the front of the magazine.

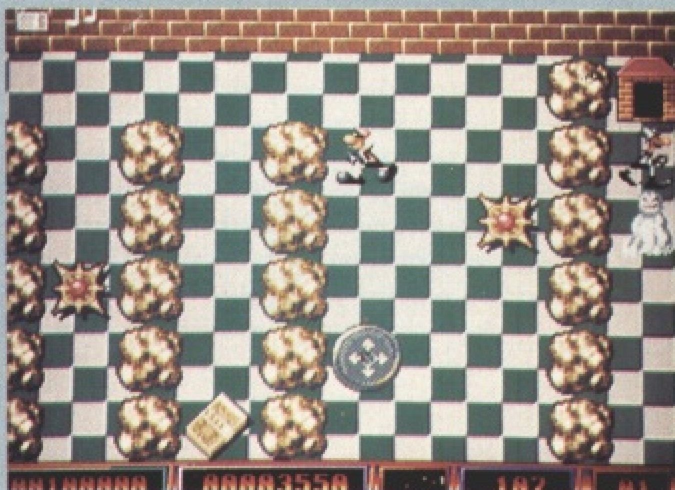
And what can you expect to pay for these French delicacies? The standard Ocean asking price of £19.95 for ST and £24.95 for Amiga applies to all the titles... Coo!

You shall go to the ball, with Golden Shoe.



FOR ART'S SAKE

Newly-formed German programming team Starbyte's debut is Leonardo, soon to be distributed over here by Entertainment International. Cast as a small-time thief, your objective is to 'steal' three objects from each of the game's 50 levels within a strict time limit. ST, Amiga and PC versions will be released late next month at a price of £19.99.



SHORT STORIES

A brief guide to forthcoming releases, delayed projects and work in progress.

▶ **Kick Off** author Dino Dini's next project is tentatively titled **Player Manager** (as advertised on the hoardings on the Amiga Kick Off). Played in a managerial vein, with substitutions, cup tournaments, transfers and injuries all playing a part, the emphasis is on long-term challenge. Dino is currently developing Player Manager with Anco, although it's still at pencil-and-paper stage and isn't likely to appear until early next year.

▶ Ian Bird, author of Electric Dreams' **Millennium 2.2** is currently beavering away on its sequel, provisionally entitled **Deuteros**. The game picks up where Millennium 2.2 left off and, Ian hopes, will take the strategy-adventure formula of the original and improve upon it. Whether Deuteros will appear on the Electric Dreams label is yet to be confirmed, but it certainly won't see the light of day until the end of the year.

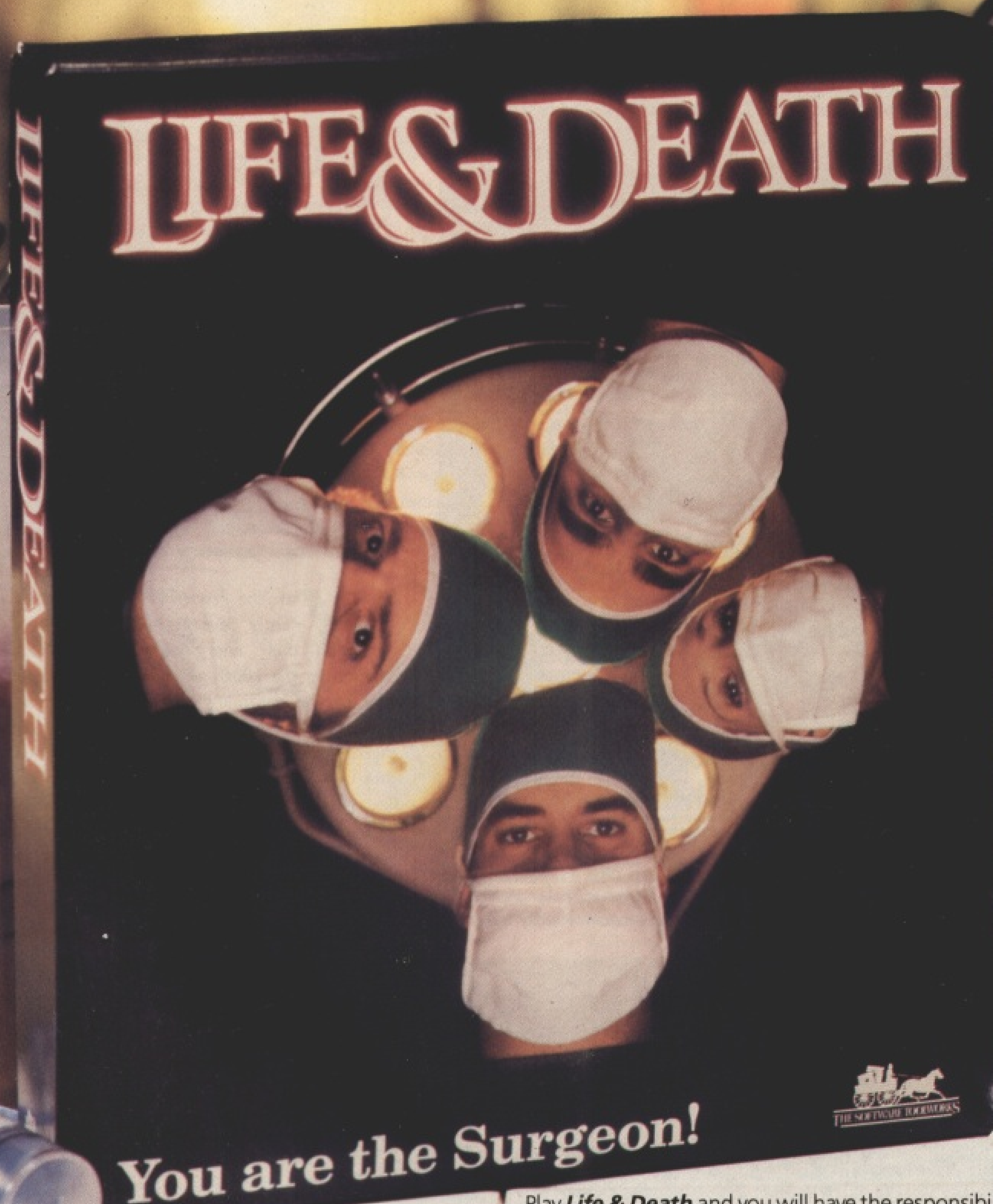
▶ Digital Magic Software, perhaps better known for the shoot 'em up (of sorts) **Scorpion** (incidentally, ST and PC versions are due out around now), has two impressive looking projects in the pipeline, both due for release towards the end of the year. A horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up with effective multi-level parallax and a 30 driving game which looks almost arcade quality. How they will shape up remains to be seen...

▶ **SEUCK** and **Wizball** creator Sensible Software is soon to make its 16-bit debut with an RPG **Ultima**-style game for Origin. Binary maestro Martin Galway is currently writing the PC version. The trio is also producing 'something sporty and refreshing' for Palace Software.

22▶

WARNING!

Do not play this game if you are of a nervous disposition



Play ***Life & Death*** and you will have the responsibility of holding a human life in your hands as you cut into living flesh.

In this – the world's first interactive medical movie – you'll enter the tension-filled atmosphere of a busy hospital. Talk with your patient. Read charts. Order X-rays, blood tests and other laboratory reports. And when the time comes . . . you will pick up the knife!

In the operating theatre, your skill will determine whether your patient goes to recovery . . . or the mortuary.

Available for IBM and compatibles, Apple II/Mackintosh, Amiga and Atari ST.

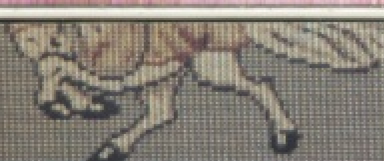
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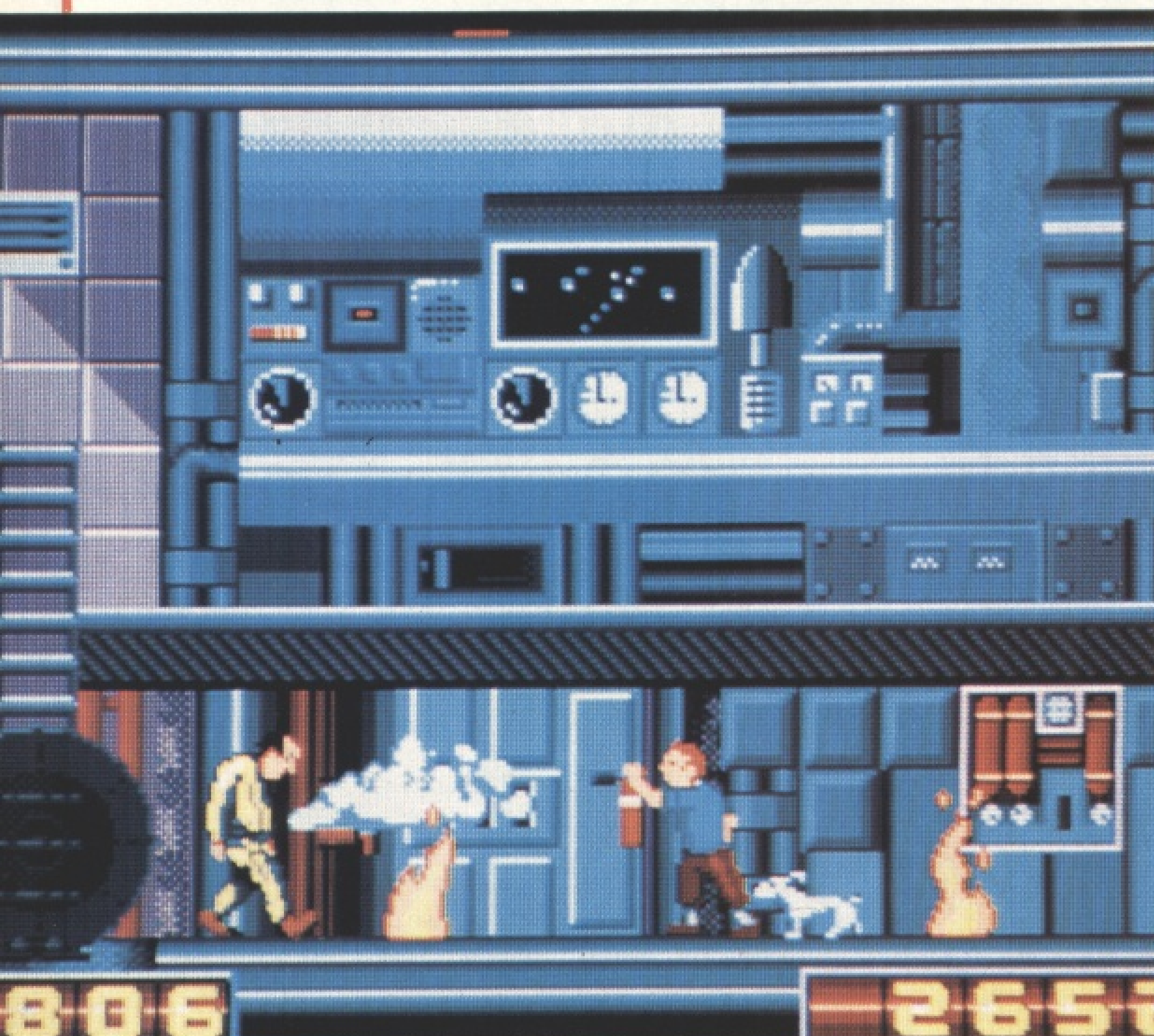
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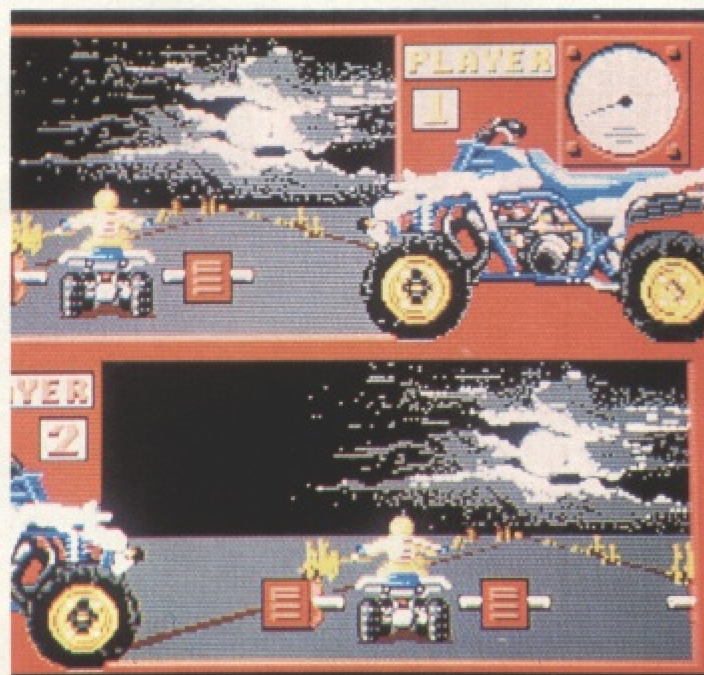
* Heavens! Hergé's star in quest for green cheese!
* Dragon takes major role in D&D scorcher!

ANOTHER FRENCH REVOLUTION

Coming your way in August is Iron Trackers – a race to the death promising laughter and suspense (in that order, we presume).



Tin Tin desperately tries to keep the moon's raging inferno under control, but trouble's approaching in the form of that none-too-friendly guard! Tune in next week for the thrilling conclusion...



With the French recently devoting all their energies to celebrating the 200th anniversary of the storming of the Bastille, you'd be forgiven for thinking that they'd have no time to worry about silly things like releasing software. Surprisingly though, Lyon-based software publisher Infogrames' release schedule is its busiest to date.

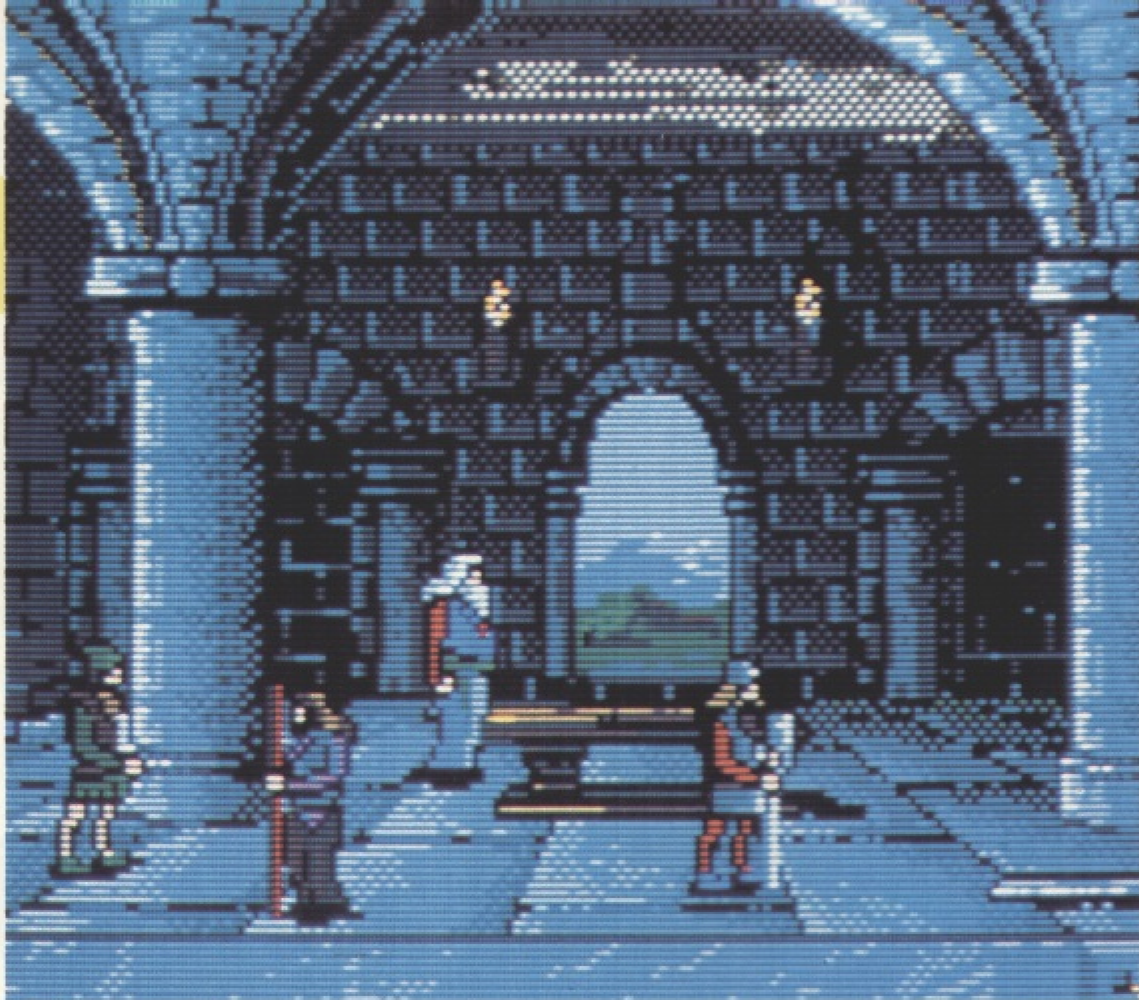
First up is **North And South,** a war game based on actual battles of the American Civil War. **North And South** has been in development in France for over a year, and was initially designed as a straight war game, but action/arcade sequences were added during programming to liven things up. The game is now in a curious mix of strategy and shoot 'em up, but it's still a war game at heart.

Following that in September

POLICE STORY

Coming soon is the third Tengen coin-op conversion to come from Domark. APB **(All Points Bulletin) casts you as Officer Bob, an intrepid traffic cop intent on bringing drunk-drivers and litter louts to justice – doing so involves high-speed car chases and shoot-outs.** APB **is due for release on ST, Amiga and PC next month at £19.99.**





Role-playing action in a Bard's Tale vein in infogrames forthcoming Drakken. Here our heroes square off with an evil sorceror and prepare to do battle.

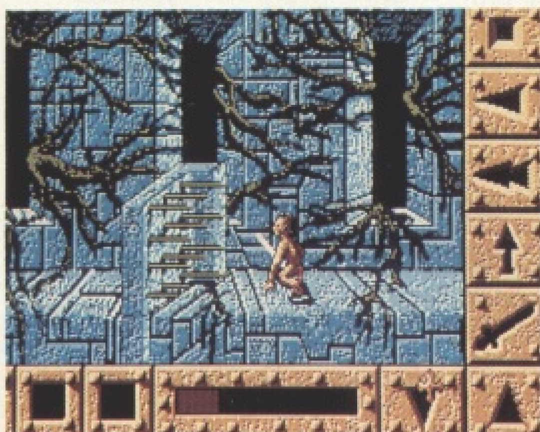
is **Drakken,** a Role Playing Game in the **Dungeons 'n' Dragons/Bard's Tale** mould, and in November, the company's flagship – **Tin Tin On The Moon.**

Based on Herge's immensely successful cartoon character, star of stage, screen and pyjama case, the game draws its inspiration from two Tin Tin books in which the intrepid young lad finds himself stranded on the moon.

Tin Tin the game is divided into two sections – in the first Tin Tin navigates his rocket ship safely through an asteroid storm and lands on the moon in a **Space Harrier** type arcade affair.

The second level is platforms 'n' ladders based, with Tin Tin attempting to free his chums Captain Haddock and Professor Calculus, put out fires that are raging on the moonbase AND defuse bombs within a strict time limit.

Tin Tin On The Moon is scheduled for release on ST, Amiga and PC at £19.95 a piece.



One for Barbarian fans – Skrull is a combination of arcade adventure and beat 'em up action due for release next month.



Janky has to helpo ED find his way back home on Dandeelion (sic) in Transmutator – and no, we don't understand either.



FISTICUFFS

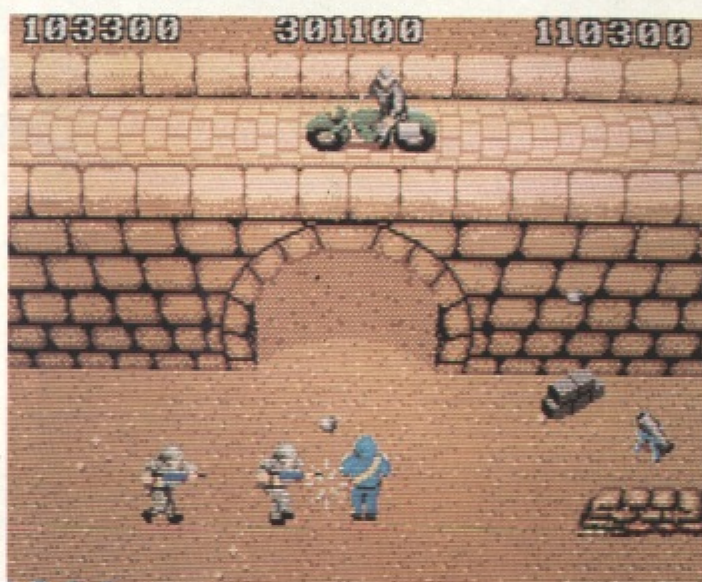
Linel's The Champ offers you the chance to follow in the footsteps of Mike Tyson by fighting your way up from the New York ghetto to the heavyweight championship of the world. The Champ will be available on the Amiga as of next month – price details are unavailable as yet.



NEWS

- *Paperboy delivered at last!*
- *Super Joe cracks 16-bit!*

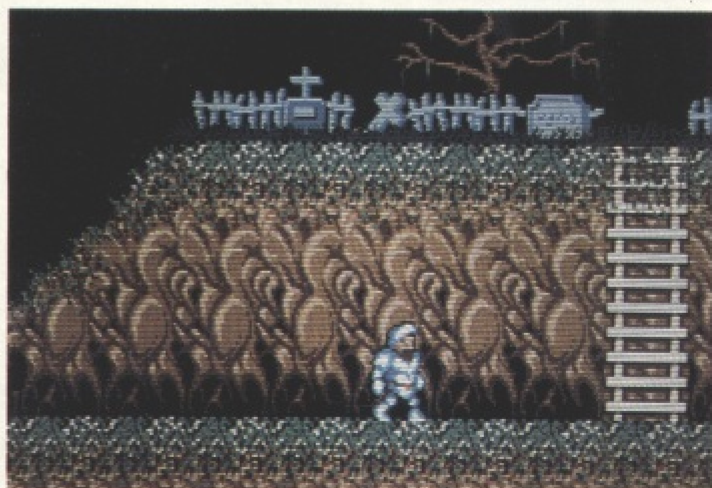
ELITE TAKES COMMAND



Pedal and paper-round pranks in Paperboy **on the ST.**

Elite's pipeline must be pretty lengthy as only now are the fruits of the Lichfield-based company's labour ripe for picking. First up are the conversions of Atari's pedal-pushing coin-op **Paperboy,** originally scheduled for release last autumn. Programmed by Darren Pegg and Martin Ward (the boys behind Overlander and Buggy Boy), the ST, Amiga and PC versions are set for release in August, priced at £19.99 (ST and Amiga) and £24.99 (PC).

As mentioned in the last issue, Super Joe Crack is back in the long overdue conversions of CapCom's classic coin-op **Commando.** Four levels of vertically-scrolling shoot 'em up mayhem should be scrolling their way onto ST and Amiga screens this Christmas. Martin Ward is producing the Amiga version while the ST version is in the hands of newcomer Neil Latarche.



Prepare to take on the undead in your quest to rescue your beloved from the clutches of an evil demon in Elite's forthcoming conversions of Ghosts 'n' Goblins.



Horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up action as Super Joe Crack goes walkabout in the ST conversion of Commando.

And finally, CapCom's **Ghosts 'n' Goblins**... originally intended for release early this year, it now won't see daylight until early next year! Following an abortive first attempt by a freelance team, Elite's resident Amiga expert Richard Frankish and ST star Darren Peg have taken over and are now using graphics taken directly from the coin-op original. Incidentally, Richard was responsible for those spot-on Amiga conversions of **Buggy Boy, Ikari Warriors** and **Space Harrier** (not Michael Sportouch as reported last month – he did the ST version).

GREEN L... FOR MIC...

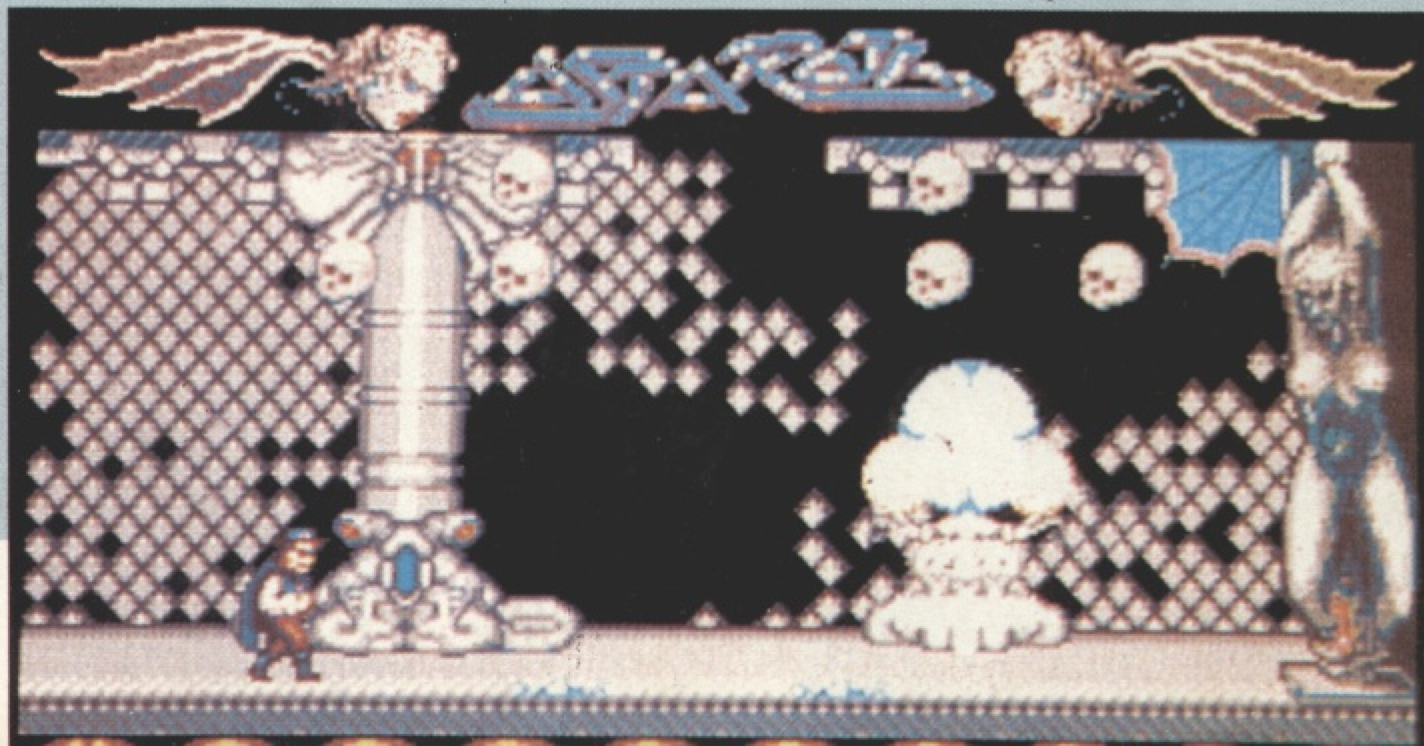
THE world's going environment-conscious, and Microprose's new 'games for yuppies' label Microstyle is going right along with it. The Tetbury-based company that brought you **Gunship, F-15 Strike Eagle, F-19, Airborne Ranger, Red Storm Rising** and other 'environmentally-sound' titles will make a play for the 'green' vote with the release of **Greenpeace: Rainbow Warrior**, officially endorsed by the environmental pressure group and released to coincide with an album of the same name.

'Right-on' players can take the role of a Greenpeace activist who's none too pleased

Clash of the ancients: Spy Hunter **meets** Xevious **in** Action Fighter**, due for release on ST and Amiga next month.**

ASTAWHAT?

Never mind the outrageous advertising campaign, Hewson's 'room-based' arcade adventure Astaroth**, has more to do with solving puzzles and outwitting your enemies than scantily-clad angels of death. ST and Amiga versions are both due for release next month at a price of £24.99. PC details (if any) are unavailable.**





LIGHT
CROSTYLE

Firebird's ST conversion of Irem's Mr Heli looks quite like the coin-op original, but you'll have to wait until next month to find out how it plays.



Don't touch that aerosol! Everyone can sleep well at nights now that Greenpeace: Rainbow Warrier is here to save the world.

about the abuse of the planet. Taking the helm of Greenpeace's famed Rainbow Warrior ship, you set out to put the world to rights and make everything lovely again by completing a series of sub-games.

These world-saving missions include the prevention of the destruction of the ozone layer by CFCs, stopping the dumping of toxic waste in the seas and oceans, shutting down nuclear generators and saving baby seals from being clubbed round the head for their fur. Aaahh...

Rainbow Warrior hits the **streets** (although not in an environmentally damaging way) on ST and Amiga in August at £24.95.

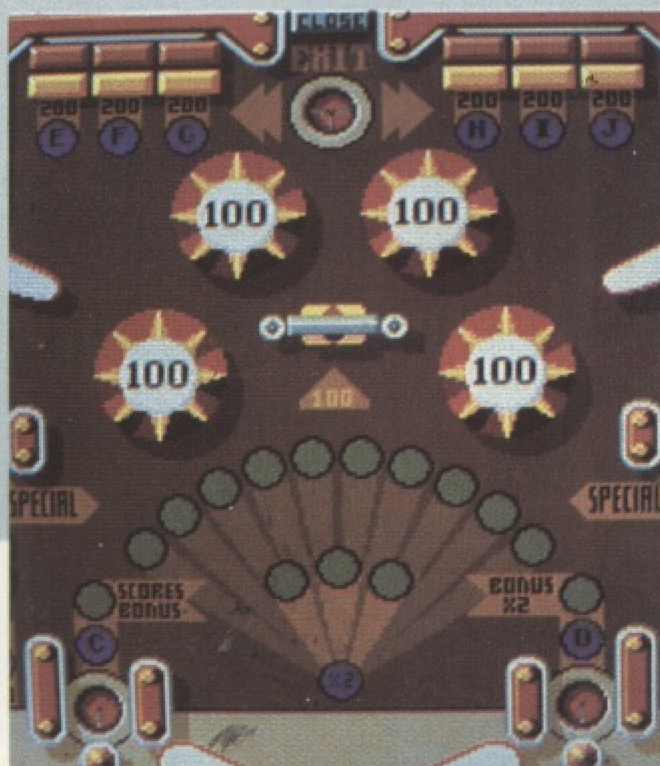
In a slightly less altruistic vein, Microprose's newly-acquired Firebird label hopes to follow-up the critical success of **Rick Dangerous** with the release of conversions of two little-known coin-ops: Irem's **Mr Heli** and Sega's ancient **Action Fighter**, both of which are due in the shops next month.

Probe Software is handling the programming of **Mr Heli**, while **Action Fighter** is in the capable hands of Core Design (the team behind **Rick Dangerous**).



PLAY THE BALL

After Anco's Pinball Wizard **and Activision's** Time Scanner **comes Loriciels' contribution to the fast-growing pinball game.** Pinball Simulator **is due for release soon via US Gold, promising all the sights and sounds of the real thing – the cost, however is still uncertain.**

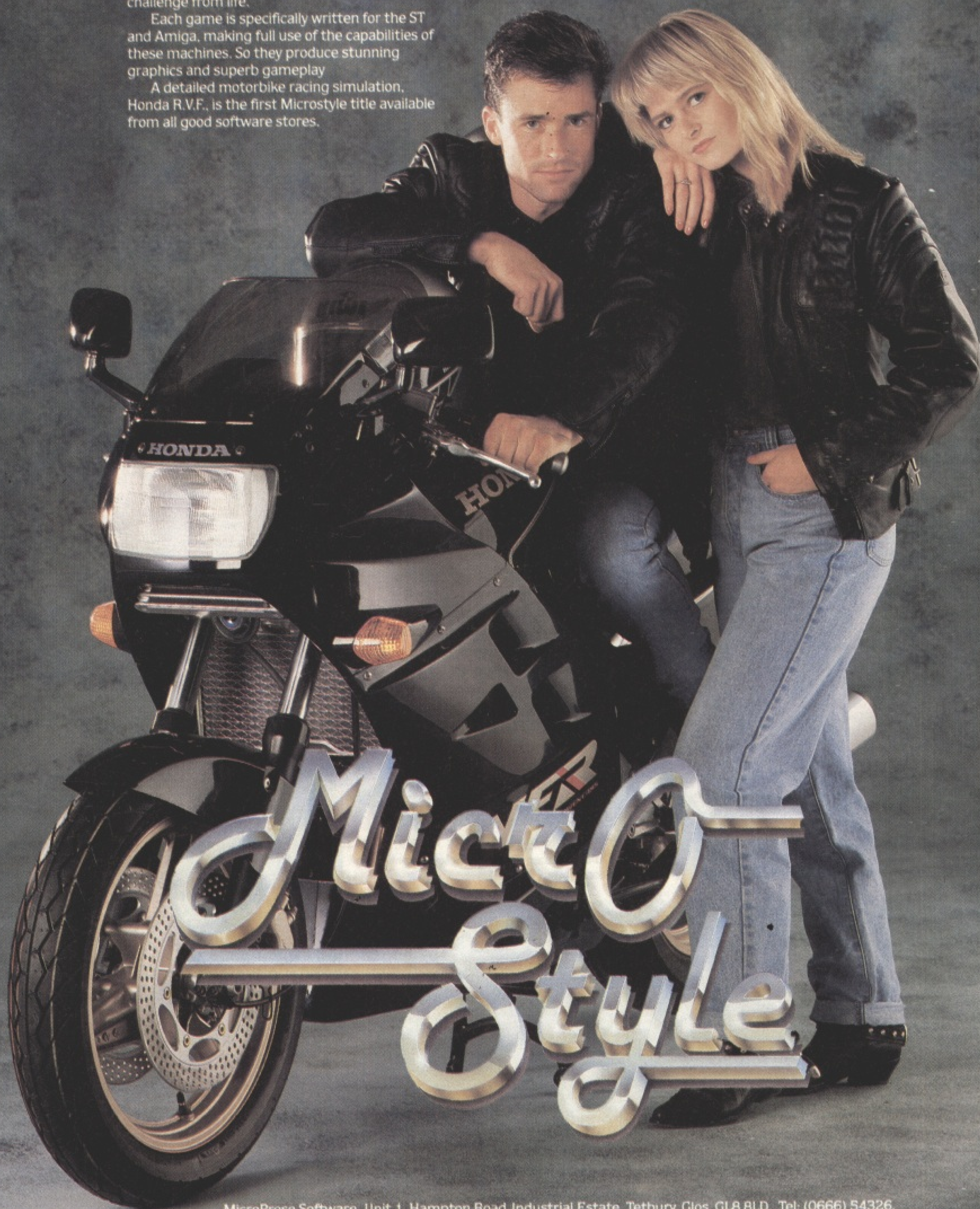


GAMES FOR ADULTS

Microstyle is the new software label. The new option for those who demand fun, excitement and challenge from life.

Each game is specifically written for the ST and Amiga, making full use of the capabilities of these machines. So they produce stunning graphics and superb gameplay

A detailed motorbike racing simulation, Honda R.V.F., is the first Microstyle title available from all good software stores.



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RAINBOW WARRIOR

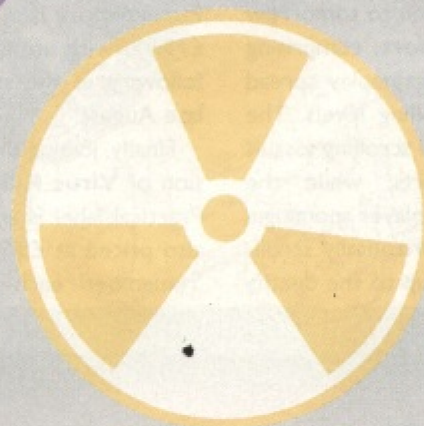
RAINBOW WARRIORS

The worlds first environment friendly software!

At last, an all action game that presents a solution to the environmental dilemma faced by the entire human race. Rainbow Warriors is an action game with real depth and meaning. It simulates seven campaigns of Greenpeace members over the last few years.







MicrO Style

GAMES FOR ADULTS

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NEWS

● Ripper cuts 16-bits!
● See Germany by night!

RIPPING YARN

CRL's controversial text adventure **Jack The Ripper** is set to shock on 16-bit later this year. The gruesome exploits of the Victorian rapist caused public outcry when it first appeared on 8-bit over two years ago, prompting the slapping of a 15 certificate on said software. Who knows, this could become an '18' certificate thanks to the extra realistic resolution of the ST, Amiga and PC.

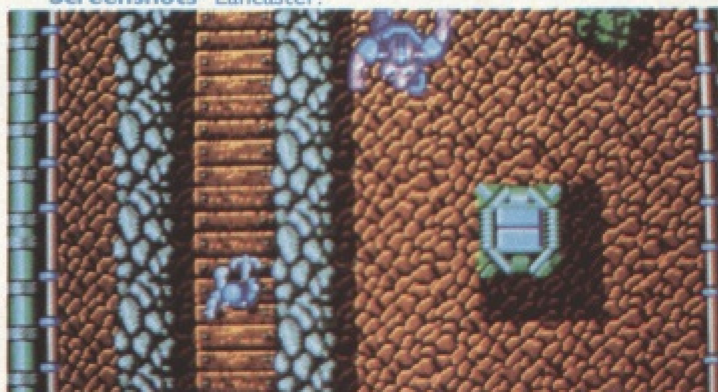
More imminently however, two titles are due to appear on the company's Actual Screenshots label. First up is **Lancaster,** a simulation which puts you in the gunners' seats of the famous bomber and recreates some of the Second World War's more daring raids against enemy forces.

Hordes of enemy fighters, barrage balloons, flak and searchlights provide the bulk of the shoot 'em up action, depicted in an unusual but effective mix of graphic styles: detailed drawings and filled 3D vector graphics. Priced at £19.95, an Amiga **Lancaster** should be out now with ST to follow in a month or so.

And from then to tomorrow with **Futuresport,** comprising two types of gameplay spread over four scrolling levels. The first is a vertical scrolling assault course of sorts, while the second has the player sporting a jetpack in a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up to the death.



Bash the Boche! Hammer the Hun! Crush the Krauts! A daring night raid across enemy territory in Actual Screenshots' Lancaster.



A fight for survival in the play arena of Actual Screenshots' Futuresport.

Both levels feature aliens to shoot or avoid and extra equipment to aid progress. ST **Futuresport** is in the shops at £19.95, with an Amiga version following at the same price in late August.

Finally, joining the Amiga version of **Virus Killer** on CRL's Practical label is an ST version, also priced at £9.99. It doesn't 'remember' each new lurgi it encounters like the Amiga original, however ST **VK** does kill virtually all known viruses . . . dead.





LAND AHOY!

Originally released on the ST almost a year ago, Overlander is at long last due for release on the Amiga. Elite is promising a range of aesthetic improvements, although how it plays in comparison to the ST original remains to be seen. Overlander will appear in September at a price of £19.99.

▶ Bleep bleep, bleep bleep, bleep bleep bleeep... erstwhile Spectrum owners may recognise that little ditty as the opening bleeps of the Hall Of The Mountain King. The platform game this tune made famous is rumoured to be making its 16-bit debut... yes, Matthew Smith's **Manic Miner**, and its sequel **Jet Set Willy** – on one disk. Who and when is currently unknown.



▶ The software industry's gone Football Crazy! And Chelsea sponsor Commodore's gone with it... the company is producing Commodore Computer Rankings for a new footie magazine called **Free Kick**, distributed free each week to 326 football grounds in England, Scotland and Wales. Player performance is analysed to produce the National Football Ranking for the UK's top players. The player with the top ranking each month gets a Commodore computer to give away to the charity of his choice!

▶ Following in the boots of Grandslam's **Peter Beardsley,** Microdeal's **International Soccer**, Anco's **Kick Off, Kenny Dalglish's Soccer Manager** and MicroProse's **Soccer** there's the **Liverpool** licence to come from Grandslam and **Manchester United** from Krisalis. Not to be outdone, Empire (Entertainment International) has signed up the silky skills of Soccer's Clown Price, Spurs' **Paul 'Gazza' Gascoigne**.

Gilbert is back at Drill and feeling very pleased with himself.

Unfortunately, the rest of his fellow Drillians are not quite so happy. In fact they are green (and slimy) with envy.

Gilbert is invited back to Earth to do a new TV series, but to avoid more of his bragging the Drillians remove parts of the Millenium Dustbin and spread them about the planet.

You are in control of Gilbert (most unusual) and to get him back to Earth within 24 hours you have to beat the Drillians at their favourite arcade games and in turn, they will give you clues to find the missing parts on your craft.

Gilbert ESCAPE FROM DRILL

Super Slimey Software

BIGGER than the biggest thing. Gilbert

FANTASTIC, BRILLIANT, ABSOLUTELY MEGA, HOT STUFF, THE BEST GAME EVER
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This super slimy game will be available on ATARI ST (£19.99), AMIGA (£19.99), SPECTRUM (£9.99), SPECTRUM DISC (£14.99), C64 (£9.99), C64 DISC (£14.99), AMSTRAD (£9.99), AMSTRAD DISC (£14.99) and MSX (£9.99).

You can order direct by sending the order form along with a cheque or postal order made payable to: TIGER DEVELOPMENTS (ENT.) LTD. to the address below. All orders will be despatched on day of release.

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ENIGMA VARIATIONS

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WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCOLADE



Marrying high-tech architecture with a natural tropical paradise, Accolade's San José headquarters.

Work approaches completion on the Grand Prix Circuit lookalike, The Cycles: International Grand Prix Racing.



Hey California! Land of sun, sea, Hollywood and... Accolade – the latest US software publisher to delve into the cooler waters of the British market. Using the wonders of satellite technology, Christina Erskine invited the San José based development team to 'make that call'.

In the ephemeral software industry, where today's top ten hit is consigned to next week's budget bucket, every software house yearns to come up with a game or game style with long-lasting appeal – something that players will want to come back to again and again.

At Accolade, developer of such illustrious titles as **Mean 18, Fight Night** and **Hardball,** product development vice president Peter Doctorow believes the company has found its long-life formula with the **'Test Drive'** style.

Test Drive, the game which put you behind the wheels of some pretty sumptuous torques, has given birth to sequels, in **The Duel** and **Grand Prix Circuit,** and add-on disks with **California Challenge** and **Super Cars.**

Now Accolade is working on a further set of extra disks for **The Duel,** as well as a wholly separate game, **The Cycles: International Grand Prix Racing,** based on the same **Test Drive** first person on-screen perspective.

"I think **Test Drive** began a trend for car driving simulations," says Doctorow. "And because the idea proved to be very successful, both with **Test Drive** itself and then with **Grand Prix Circuit,** it didn't take a rocket engineer to work out that we could do another one – motorcycles came to mind. That's the one-sentence story of the product design!"

The Cycles is currently being put together by **Test Drive** developer, Distinctive Software, which is concentrating on accuracy and attention to detail.

"We had to find out details of exactly how these motorcycles perform, and the precise specification of each class of cycle," explained Peter. "Some games of this type are simple arcade games, but this is very much a proper simulation.

"In The Cycles you'll find the **Grand Prix Circuit's** technology refined. We've worked hard to make sure that you really do get a real sense of being on a cycle; not just of turning corners, for example, but also going up and down hills. We've also included a tilting horizon to further enhance the experience of being on a motorcycle – and I don't think that's been done before.

"We've also included varying driving techniques among your opponents. Some, say, will be more aggressive in their driving habits – the

Americans perhaps (!) – and you'll be able to tell by their racing colours who is who and what to expect.

Not only will players be able to choose their cycle, but there will also be a choice of courses from around the world: in Monaco, the UK, Holland and Japan as well as the US.

More directly related to **The Duel** are the two latest extra disks: **European Challenge** and **Muscle Cars.**

European Challenge is a scenery disk providing six 'typical' roadways across the continent. However, it should probably be stressed that this is European scenery as the Americans see it, and probably about as 'typically' European as the Epcot and Disneyworlds that we go to visit are typically American.

Remarkably enough, the first roadway for you to try your driving skills on just happens to be 'English countryside'.

Accolade has supplied the developers with its home-produced booklets and photos in the interests of graphic accuracy and to assist in creating that authentic English atmosphere. Part of the English countryside chapter runs like this:

"Rolling countryside, a little like California, but mellower – the curves are not so tight. It's a two-lane road, and remember the traffic flow is reversed"... (ie, don't forget to put the cars on the left).

"Traffic will be cars like Jaguars, MGs, Rolls Royces, etc...

"Scenery should be sheep in a single cluster, stone walls (goes on to define a dry-stone wall), low bushes, with maybe some little yellow flowers, Cotswold style cottages (see photo) and white and brown timber buildings."

You get the picture, "I guess this is what the Americans think of England," says Peter.

Other countries to get the treatment are Holland (straight, flat roads with Renaults, Ford Fiestas, tulips, cows, windmills and canals), Rhineland, an Autobahn, Swiss mountains and the French Riviera.

With **Muscle Cars,** Accolade is back on home territory, in the US of the 1960s, as five classic cars are wheeled out for your inspection and enjoyment. All hold a special place in the affections of the Americans that used to drive them – "This really is one for us old guys," comments Peter Doctorow, 44 – and may clang a few bells in British memories as well.

The Pontiac GTO, Dodge Charger and Corvette Stingray are featured in the condition in which they left the factory, with mighty engines, and in the case of the Stingray, the then highly unusual feature of fuel injection.

However, the remaining two are both customised versions of mass-produced cars: the Shelby Mustang and Camaro Yenko. Carrol Shelby was a familiar figure on the US road racing circuit, who attained celebrity status with his fine-tuning of Mustangs. Yenko did much the same with Camaros.

"These cars were able to accelerate brutally when they left the factory, but they were made even faster by the tuning shops," explains Peter. "Once modified, the cars would be made commercially available – to those who could afford them."

Both add-ons are due out in Europe in October, and initially for PC compatibles, then ST and Amiga.

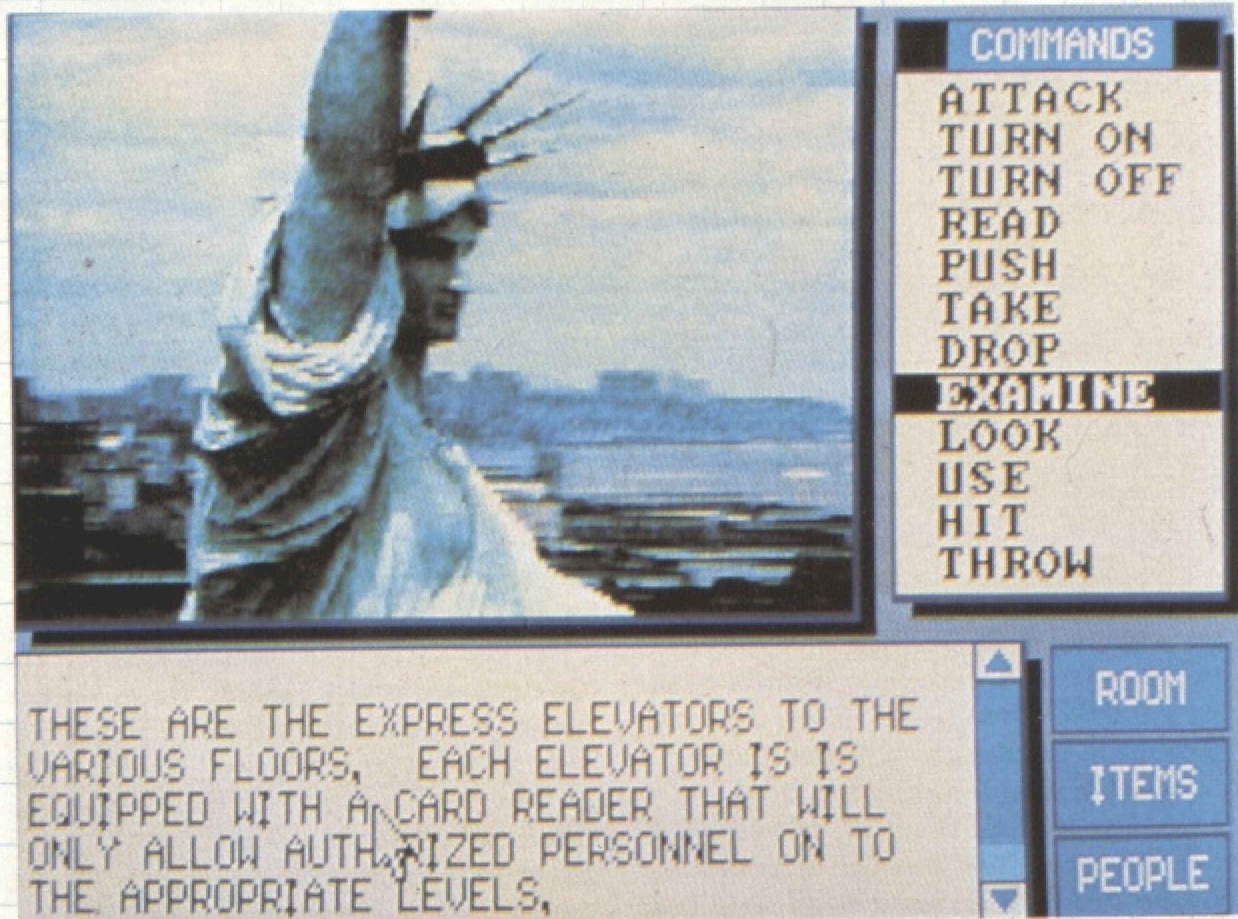
Moving away from **Test Drive** derivatives, although not from simulations, Accolade is also developing **Heatwave: Offshore Superboat Racing,** a game based on the relatively new sport of offshore powerboat racing.

As with the **The Cycles** though, there are a myriad of vehicles and classes to choose from before you start the race proper, on one of a selection of courses. You race your powerboat not just against the clock, but other competitors as well.

"We haven't got far enough yet to be able to say exactly which courses will appear in the finished version," admits Peter.

The course at Miami (as seen on TV, with everybody's favourite alligator-owning policeman) is a 'definite', however, since it was this exposure which helped to popularise offshore powerboat racing as a sport in the US. "Also, it was on the Miami course that Don Johnson

Product development vice president, Peter Doctorow: 'we sell to people with a higher income... more mature perhaps.'



A digitised Liberty watches over New York City in Conspiracy, **a mouse-driven graphic adventure.**

PC powerboats make a splash in Heat Wave.



became the superboat champion of the world last year," Peter points out. Not a lot of people know that.

Apart from Miami, the choice of scenery apparently lies between courses in Detroit, Portland in Oregon, and Lake Mead near Las Vegas. "We want the locations to be full of graphic detail and if it looks difficult to distinguish between locations, we'll look elsewhere."

Like the **Test Drive** series, the screen will show a first person perspective of dashboard instruments to help you drive (yes, "drive"; you're a driver, not a captain or skipper) the boat, but you'll see the bulk of the action from a 'helicopter's eye view', above the boats.

Despite its championing of the 'driver's seat' view for realism's sake, Accolade has firm reasons for preferring a top-down viewpoint for **Heatwave,** as Peter explains.

"We try to be as honest as possible when portraying any activity, but there is the question of what players perceive the reality to be. For example, most people will have only seen powerboat racing on TV and it is that perspective, the helicopter-type view, that they recognise. If the entire simulation took place from a first-person viewpoint players would probably not see it as 'realistic' in the same way.

"It's a reflection of the fact that most people do not get to experience first-hand the activities that we present. For example, **Steel Thunder** was an Accolade tank simulation – now there can't be more than 11 people playing the game who had been in a tank, and yet we went to great lengths to get the correct detail regarding the interior of the tank – even though the vast majority of players wouldn't know if we'd just made it up. And that same principle applies to our Ferraris, Lamborghinis and offshore powerboats as well."

The emphasis on realism also means that weather conditions are liable to vary – although for authenticity's sake the water will never get too choppy, since powerboats don't race in stormy weather in real life. But the wind will vary in speed and direction, so you'll have to be careful you don't flip the boat over.

Aside from simply driving as fast as possible, you also need to navigate around the course, which will normally be a case of aligning your powerboat with the shoreline. If you wander off the correct line, however, and lose sight of land you'll have to find your way back again.

Like **The Cycles, Heatwave** will be out in the autumn, for PC compatibles, ST and Amiga.

With **Synergy,** a 16-bit arcade adventure, Accolade is heralding "hot news" – it will be the first title to be released in Europe before becoming available in the US.

On closer examination, however, it would appear that this is a matter of expediency rather than brave new philosophy. "The ST and Amiga versions will be finished first, and they always sell better in Europe. Still, it's also true that **Synergy** is a European-style product – it's not baseball or American football, it's an intergalactic scenario with great attention paid to the graphic details and the sound effects."

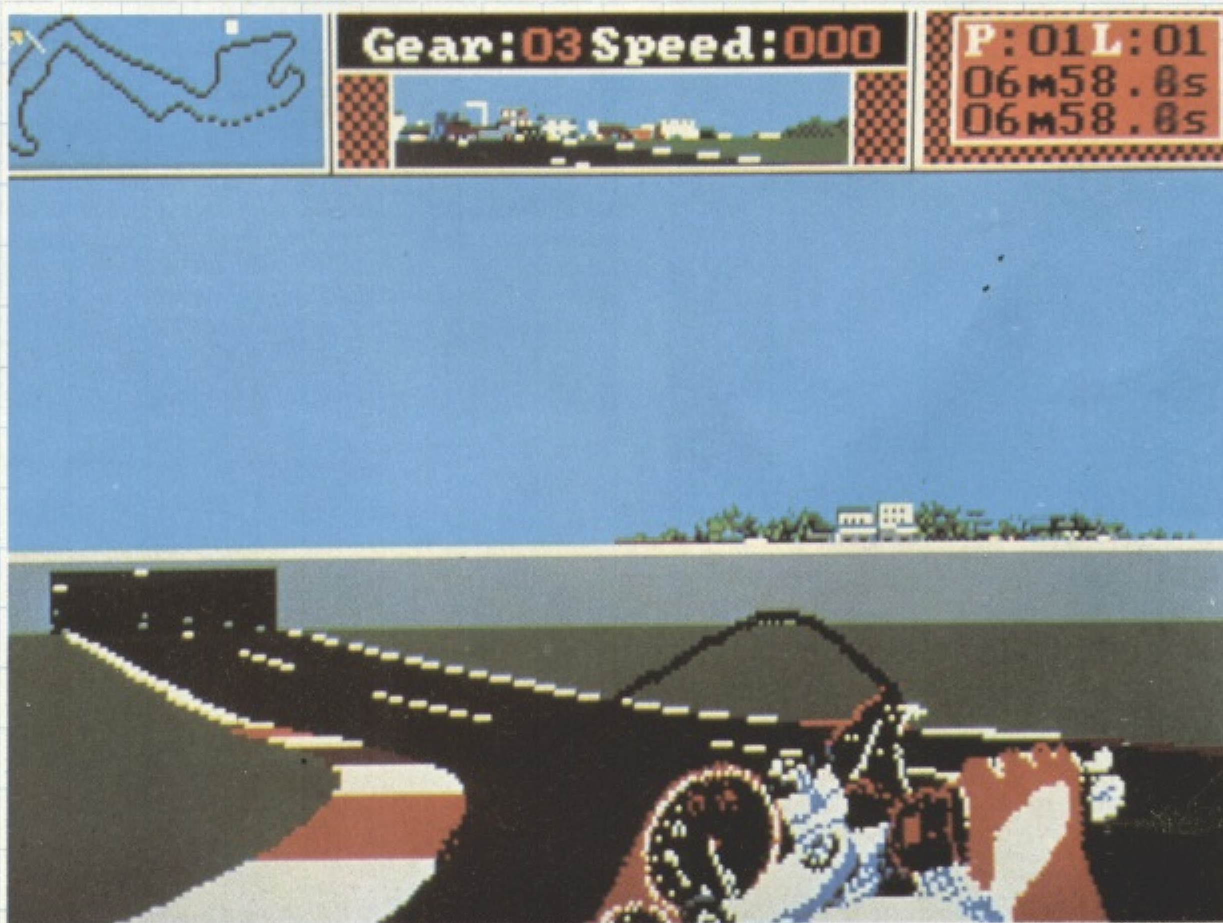
Synergy's plot follows familiar lines of navigation and exploration through an alien building complex, encountering and slaying monsters, collecting keys to open doors to find pieces of a circuit board to fit together in order to rescue a community in another galaxy. Then it's home to Earth in time for tea.

"One of **Synergy's** tasty features is that it can be just as rewarding to play it for a short while as in a long session because all the quests are layered – you could, say, just find a couple of keys and then leave the next bit until next time."

Perhaps the most important thing from the would-be customer's point of view however, is that Accolade is 99.99% certain that when it hits the streets the game will not be called **Synergy.** "We don't have the final title right now, because we're still researching trademarks – but come October, don't go asking for an Accolade game called Synergy!"







More cycling action as the rider approaches a tunnel in The Cycles.

The game with no fixed name may boast large colourful graphics, but for on-screen realism it would be hard to beat the illustrations in **Conspiracy,** which Peter is quite excited about.

"Conspiracy represents something very new for the whole industry. It's set in New York City and contains 500 digitised scenes of New York. In other words, the entire storyline is digitised."

Aside from the digitisation, **Conspiracy,** is a graphic adventure: collect and explore, picking up and dropping objects using on-screen menus of words which you select with the joystick or mouse rather than typing in.

"The object is to locate seven files which are scattered around the city; you have to find them before either the KGB or CIA finds you, and there's a fairly elaborate storyline explaining how those files went missing."

All these titles are due out in the UK this autumn – around the end of October, and all will be available for PC, ST and Amiga.

Peter Doctorow is confident that each one meets Accolade's standards of attention to detail and authenticity. "The Accolade philosophy is to find product which appeals to older people.

"The product is deeper, more complex, requires more disks, and has higher development costs and therefore Accolade needs to charge slightly more – so we sell to people with a higher income. Older may not be the right word – more 'mature' perhaps.

"But our simulations, say, will be an accurate simulation first, not an arcade game. A title like **Conspiracy** will be more elaborate and more realistic than other similar games. Ditto **The Duel** – the experience is one that is more long-lasting and deeper."

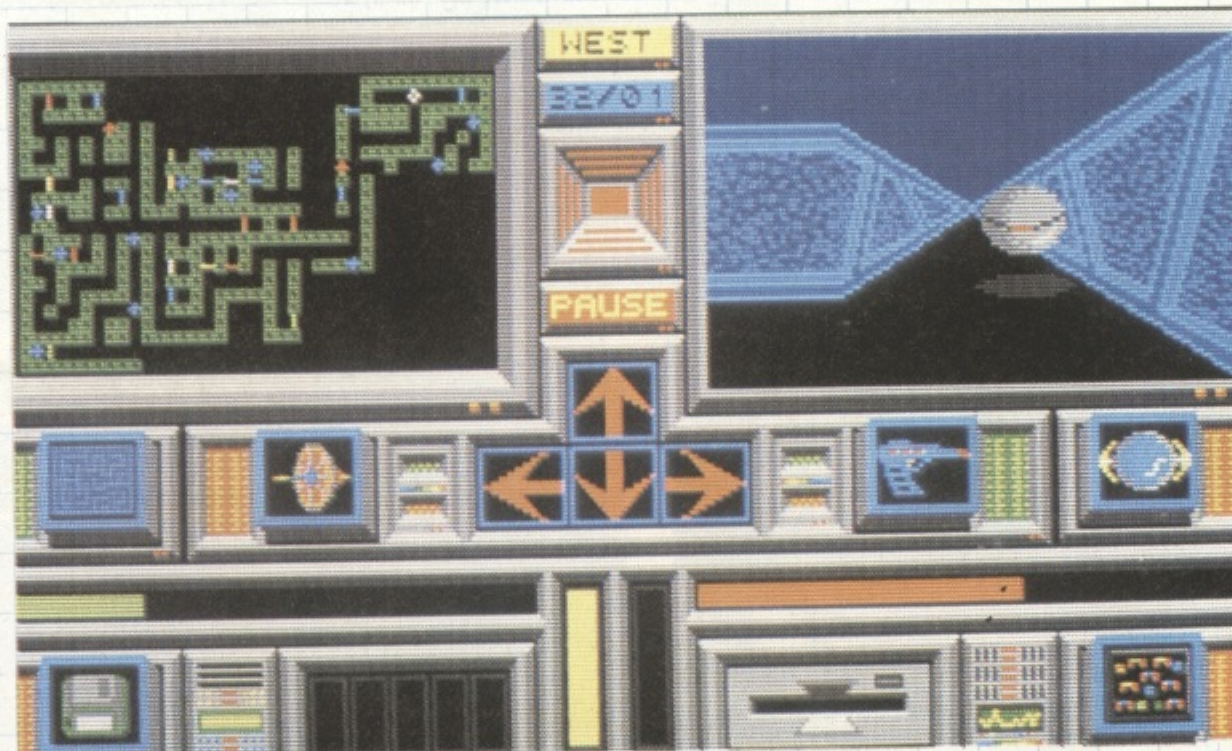
The company uses mainly third party programming houses to develop its games under contract – and under close supervision.

"We normally have a tremendous input into our games – we believe that that is necessary to ensure quality. We drive the design, the graphics, sound effects, musical manual writing. Outside groups will do the technological implementation – with some creative input of course."

It's a strategy that seems to work; recently Accolade was voted Publisher of the Year by the US Game Developers Association. Criteria for earning the award included such behavioural niceties as 'Showing Respect For Developers' and 'Training Developers Most Fairly In Contractual Negotiations', so it's hardly surprising that since the award was announced, more than a few developers have been beating a path to Accolade's door.

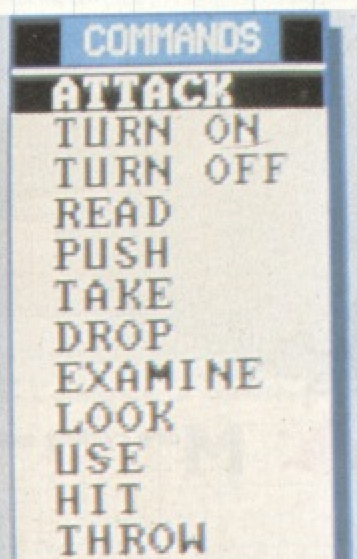
Accolade's vice president, international, Randy Thier – a man with time on his hands.

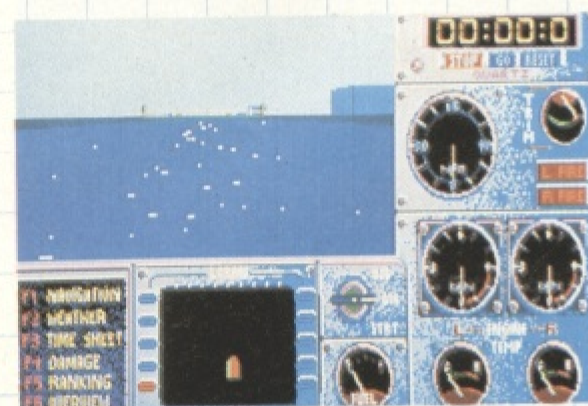




Synergy (or whatever), navigation and exploration through an alien complex.







Conventional PC graphics as in Heat Wave pale beside the digitised scenes of Conspiracy (left).

European Rush Hour.

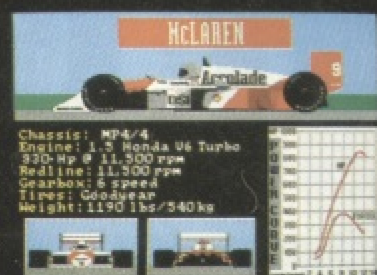
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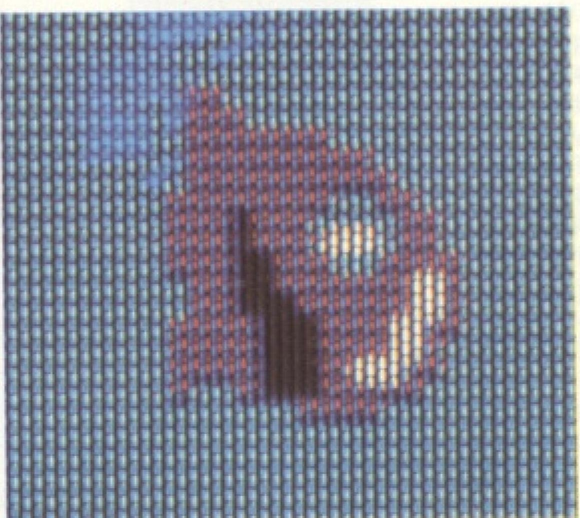
Rainbow Islands



Firebird's colourful conversion of Taito's sequel to Bubble Bobble got Gary Penn bubbling with enthusiasm when he went to see Graftgold's Work In Progress in February. Now he's somewhere over the rainbow.

With the episode with the bubbles blown over, Bub and Bob are back, this time in human form with smiles on their faces and rainbows in their pockets (or are they just pleased to see us?).

The peaceful natives of the Rainbow Islands have been captured by the Boss Of Shadow, who intends to turn them into his followers. However this takes time – time which our heroes can use to reach his hideout on the seventh island and defeat him.



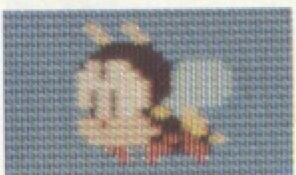
The Boss Of Shadow's boys aren't all that they seem. Picking up a crystal ball allows you to see the creatures as they really are... Bubble Bobble baddies! They reappear from island to island, but with increased intelligence and wearing different disguises. For example, the 'caterpillar' on Level One becomes a 'tank' which fires on Level Two and then learns to jump after you on later levels.

"Andrew's favourite friends? 'Monster Island's quite nice, with red-nosed werewolves, Frankenstein monsters and little bats that change into draculas.'"

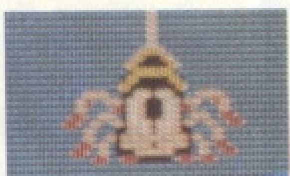


A 'map' of the seven Rainbow Islands is shown before play. Each island is split into four vertically scrolling rounds (levels) which increase in height. You start at the bottom and the idea is to reach the Goal Line, ie: the top of the round.

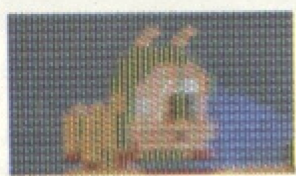
The cast of Insect Island...



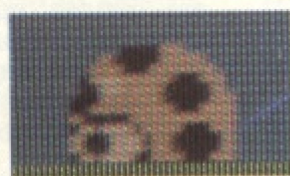
The bees appear from beehives and buzz around in an awkward but predictable pattern.



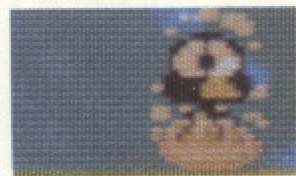
Spiders follow Bub, spinning webs to follow him up the screen.



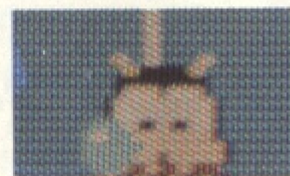
Baby worms (caterpillars) patrol the platforms, left and right.



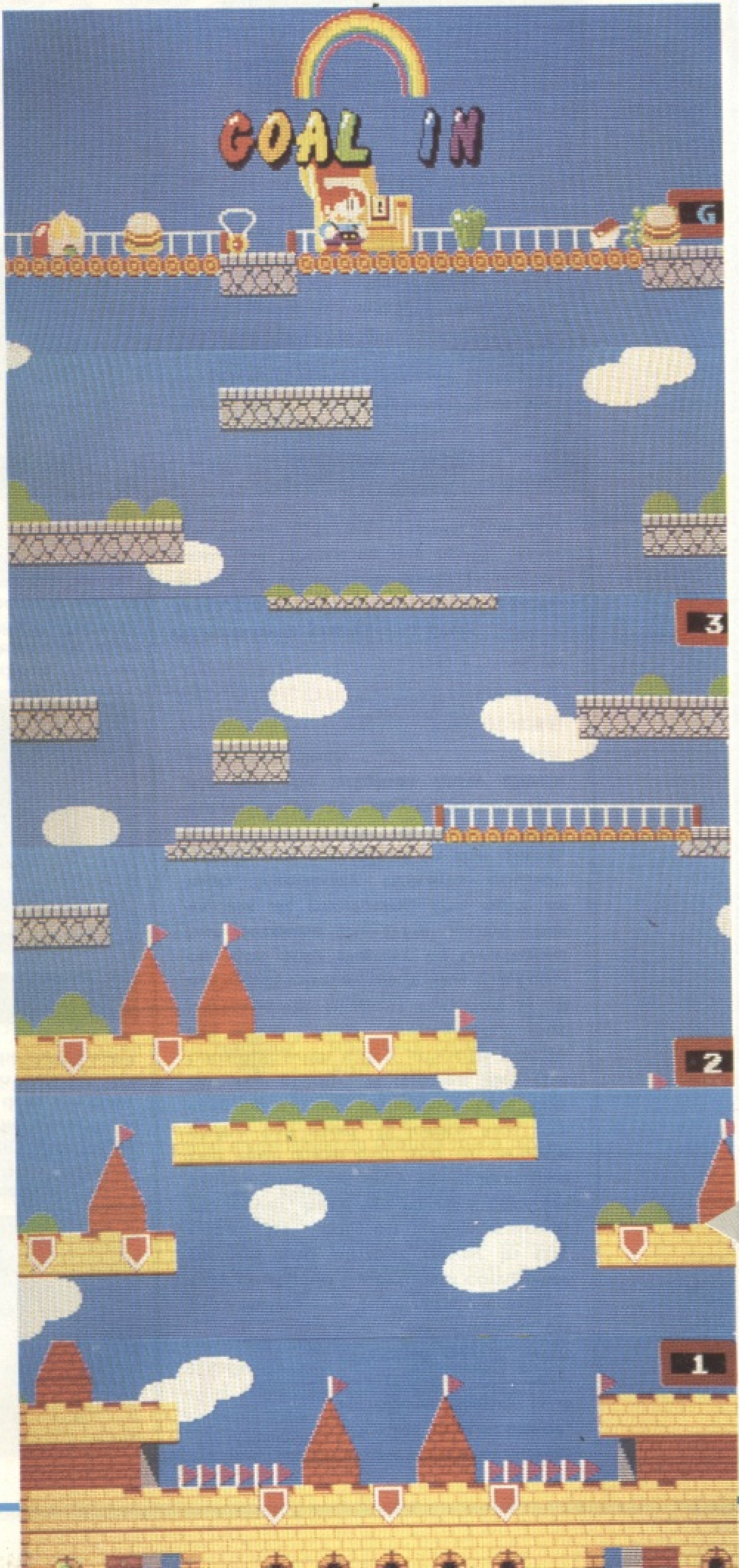
Beetles (ladybirds) have a tendency to fly around.



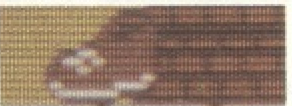
Crows hatch from eggs, stopping in between flaps.



The Minosuke is encased in a chrysalis hanging from a thread and appears only once in the entire game!



Apart from the food, flowers and the like dotted around the platforms, there are 42 different types of hidden bonus to uncover for points, points, points. And then there are the useful items.



The Training Shoes speed Bub up.



Red pots provide extra rainbows (up to a maximum of three).

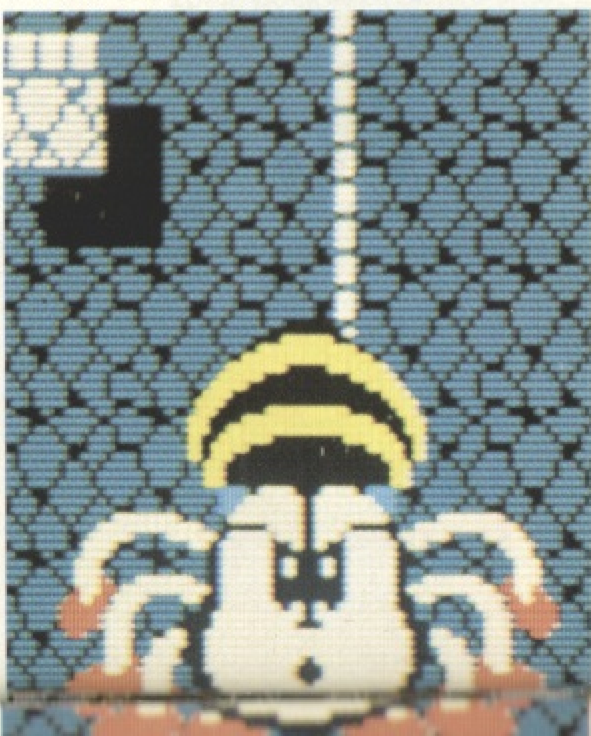


Yellow pots make Bub fire rainbows faster.

"The program keeps statistics about everything – the items you collect, the number of gems, their colours and so on and adjusts the gameplay to compensate. For example: if the program counts too many 'Hurry!' messages, it shows you take too long so chances are a guardian angel will appear to help you get to the top."



Every bad buy you kill spins away and leaves behind food, a gem, or a special item. There are ways and means of determining which item appears, for example hitting a creature with the star which produces the rainbow results in food being left.



BUBBLICIOUS!

Two short, fat and sickeningly cute brontosauri bubbled and bounced their way to cult arcade success over two years ago. Bubble Bobble saw Bub and Bob battling bullies through 100 screens of 'platforms' in an attempt to overthrow evil and free their girlfriends in the process. Firebird's 16-bit conversions were playable but didn't quite capture the magic of the original. However this criticism certainly can't be said of the conversions of its sequel . . .

ALL THAT GLITTERS

The team behind the 16-bit conversions of Rainbow Islands combines the talents of four industry veterans . . . Steve Turner (second from top), Andrew Braybrook (bottom), Dominic Robinson (top) and John Cummings (third from bottom).

Andrew's responsible for the conversion of Rainbow Islands to ST and Amiga. His impressive portfolio can be found on page 98 in this month's Backspace. As for the rest of the team involved . . .

Steve Turner is a name which should ring bells with





Take too long to reach the top of an island and the 'Hurry' message flashes across the screen, warning the player that the island is sinking. As the water level rises, the pace hots up and so does the tune, which really gets the adrenalin flowing. But don't panic or it's bye bye Bub (he can't swim).



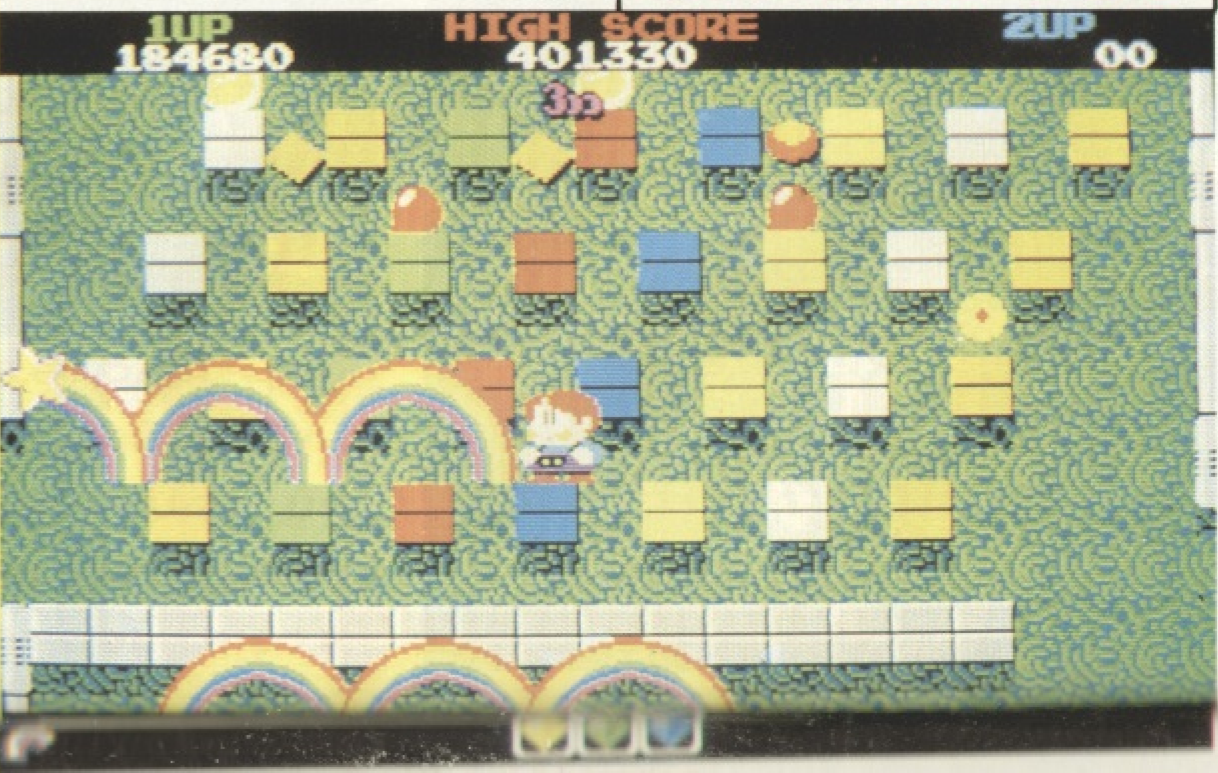
In typical Taito tradition, Rainbow Islands features plenty of cute touches, like bits from Bubble Bobble (sort of understandable as this is its sequel) and an Arkanoid island, complete with all the scenery and bad guys from Taito's bat and ball game – with the sound effects replacing the tune!

ST

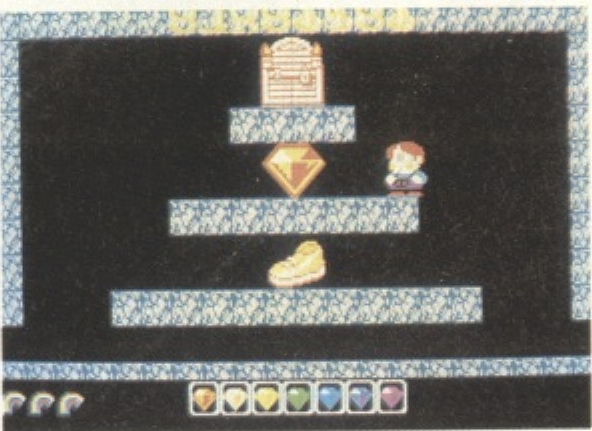
Like its predecessor, Rainbow Islands is a beautifully constructed game with the emphasis on playability – a 'feel' rarely completely captured by original computer games and almost never in the case of coin-op conversions. However, here we have a conversion which not only feels just like the real thing but like an arcade game full stop. It looks like the coin-op almost pixel for pixel, colour for colour. It moves like the coin-op, with silky smooth scrolling and fluid animation. But perhaps the biggest surprise of all is that it even *sounds* like the coin-op, not only thanks to Graftgold but because the ST's sound chip excels at producing the sort of high frequency tinkling sounds which are prevalent in the game. It's a conversion of such a high quality that it's easy to forget that it's not the original. Now that's arcade perfect.

PRICE	£24.95
RELEASE DATE	September
GRAPHICS	90%
SOUND	90%
PLAYABILITY	95%
VALUE	88%

OVERALL 94%



At the fourth Goal Line you meet the Big Boss. The large spider found at the end of the first level bounces across the screen, chasing Bub. Repeated hits with rainbows is the way to see off these rampant rascals.



A Secret Room is found on each island (provided you do something specific along the way) where permanent options are yours for the taking. Rainbow Islands **aficionados will know how to get them – and will also probably notice the absence of the coin-up's three hidden islands...**

"The hidden islands are missing due to memory restrictions. This isn't remotely detrimental to the gameply – at worst it creates a slight flaw in the overall story. But you do get seven tenths of the original, and we are talking about cramming two megabytes of game into two 440K disks."

"We thought it was more important to get as many features of those seven islands as possible – and we have, following the documentation provided by Taito. In fact there are some features they'd documented but hadn't put in the game, so we put some of them in the conversion."

"We could have missed out certain elements and implemented all 10 islands, but you've got to be pretty good at the coin-op to get to see them, and we thought it best to provide something for everybody. I would have liked to get the whole game in, but it would have meant three disks and this just wasn't viable."

"It looks like the coin-op boys spent around three years, designing, writing and playtesting the game, and even then there are a couple of bugs – which we attempted to avoid. In all, it's taken me at least seven months to write, and considerably many more man-hours between the team as a whole."

self-respecting Spectrum owners, most notably perhaps for his innovative 3D arcade adventures Avalon **and** Dragontorc. **Steve spent four weeks on music for** Rainbow, **which amounts to 13 pieces in all, including the main theme (a variation on** Somewhere Over The Rainbow**). Mr T's latest project is** Bushido **(8-bit at present although 16-bit versions are a possibility), an oriental arcade adventure with RPG undertones and an innovative interactive soundtrack for a film-like atmosphere.**

John Cummings was partly responsible for Hewson's horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up Zynaps, **which united him with Dominic Robinson. With his games-writing days behind him, John now prefers to concentrate on producing graphics and writing associated utilities to aid development.**

Dominic Robinson is the man who performed the 'impossible' and converted Andrew Braybrook's Uridium **to Spectrum. He joined Graftgold in September of '87 and has since been writing outstanding 3D routines (which will hopefully appear next year in a game, provisionally entitled** Simulcra, **sometime next year) and generating fjords with Fractals on the ST. His involvement with the Rainbow Project was the program's core, which has nothing to do with the game itself – it's an Operating System which helps Andrew to talk to the screen, joystick, keyboard and so on.**

Coin-op champ David O'Connor (third from top know the Rainbow Islands **arcade game inside out (just for the record, his best score to date is 63,549,200), which is why he had a hand in playtesting the conversions. David also had the seemingly impossible task of converting** Rainbow **to the Sepctrum and Amstrad, and he's keen to move onto 16-bit, which is why his next project is likely to be on the PC.**

As agile as Bub is at leaping around the screen, you won't get very far until you master the use of rainbows – whose versatility is mostly responsible for the game's playability. Bub produces only one rainbow at first, accompanied by a jingle of bells, but a string of two and ultimately three are possible if you pick up special potions.



Beasts and bonuses can be trapped in rainbows, which are then broken to crush anything below.



Bub can climb on rainbows for extra height, or walk from one to another like a stairway.



A

Andrew's made use of the Amiga's 'Blitter' for plotting the sprites on screen. "Before I did this," he says, "it was considerably slower than the ST when running the same program. However using the blitter not only matches the speed of the ST, it improves on it. There are so many sprites running around, it gives the chip plenty to do – it's probably used most of the time." The music sounds great in three channel stereo (the 'Hurry!' message sound 'moves' from one speaker to the other), with sound effects playing on two channels to create the illusion of them coming from the centre of the stage. The result is an ever-so-slightly more accurate incarnation of the coin-op on one disk instead of two.

PRICE	£24.95
RELEASE DATE	September
GRAPHICS	90%
SOUND	90%
PLAYABILITY	95%
VALUE	88%

OVERALL 94%



There's nothing planned for the MS-DOS compatibles. The graphics exist on PC, and Graftgold could probably handle the conversions, but not on anything less on EGA and even then it would take time. "It's virtually like writing four games," Andrew explains. "One for CGA, EGA, VGA and Tandy 16-colour – and where the hell would we get one of those from anyway?" The good news is that Graftgold is considering putting Dominic Robinson's forthcoming 3D game on PC – although that said, other versions aren't due until well into 1990.

Beac

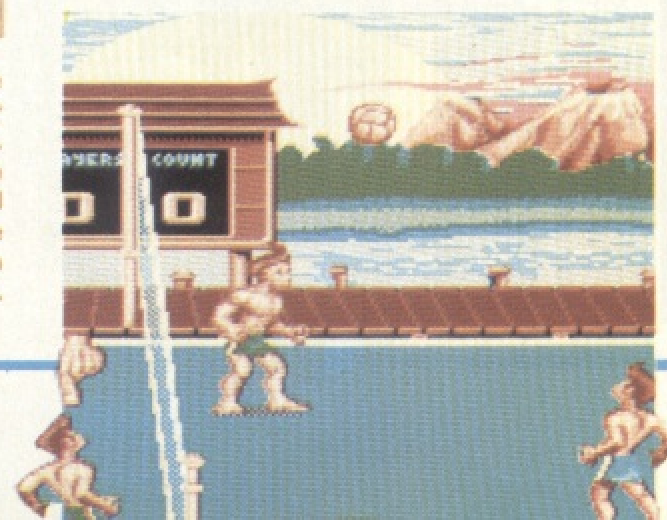
Forget the stuffy six-a-side variety, two-on-two beach volleyball is where it's at. Gary Whitta heads for the shore with Ocean to bump, set, spike and smash his way to stardom.



A point is scored by making the ball touch the ground in your opponent's half – but only on your own service. Winning on your opponent's serve results in the service changing hands. Each time the ball crosses the net, it can be touched twice before it has to be returned. The first to reach seven points (with a clear lead of two) is the winner.

Volleyball isn't as old as you might think – it was invented in the USA in 1895 by Willie G Morgan, the son of Welsh immigrants. The game was originally known as "Minonette" – although nobody knows why.

The game was initially only played in YMCA's, and it wasn't until 1946, when the International Volleyball Association was formed in Paris, that the game was recognised as an official sport. In 1964 Volleyball became an Olympic sport at the Tokyo games and its popularity snowballed from there.

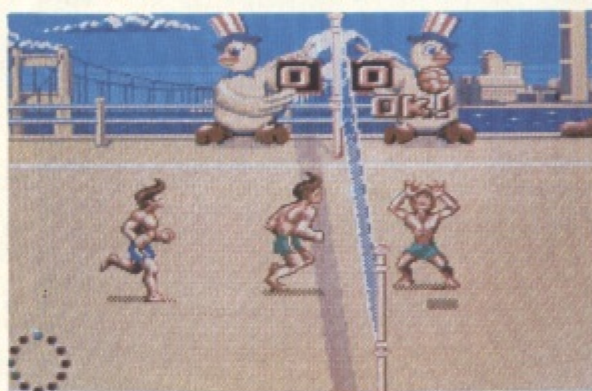




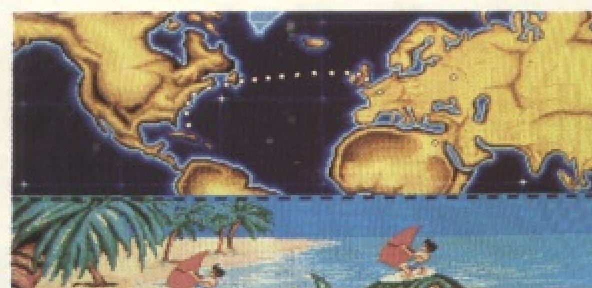
This recent increase in popularity has led to the invention of Beach Volleyball, a more aggressive two-a-side variation on the theme. Originally it was played on California's famed Muscle Beach just as an excuse for players to show off their tanned pecs, but it has since evolved into a professional



Typically, French humour plays a major part in the presentation, and it's most apparent in the animations that show the participating duo's voyage to each country they visit. The second member of the team always seems to come a cropper in one way or another – his unfortunate exploits include flying into the mouth of the Statue of Liberty, being dragged across the desert by a stampeding camel and riding on the back of a sea monster!



The control mode is remarkably straightforward – just get yourself under the ball and hit fire at the correct time (timing is all-important) to either return the ball or pass it to your partner. When the ball is passed, you take control of your teammate and the same procedure applies. Where the ball goes depends entirely on the type of shot you play...







n Volley



sport all of its own, with its own leagues, cups and tournaments.

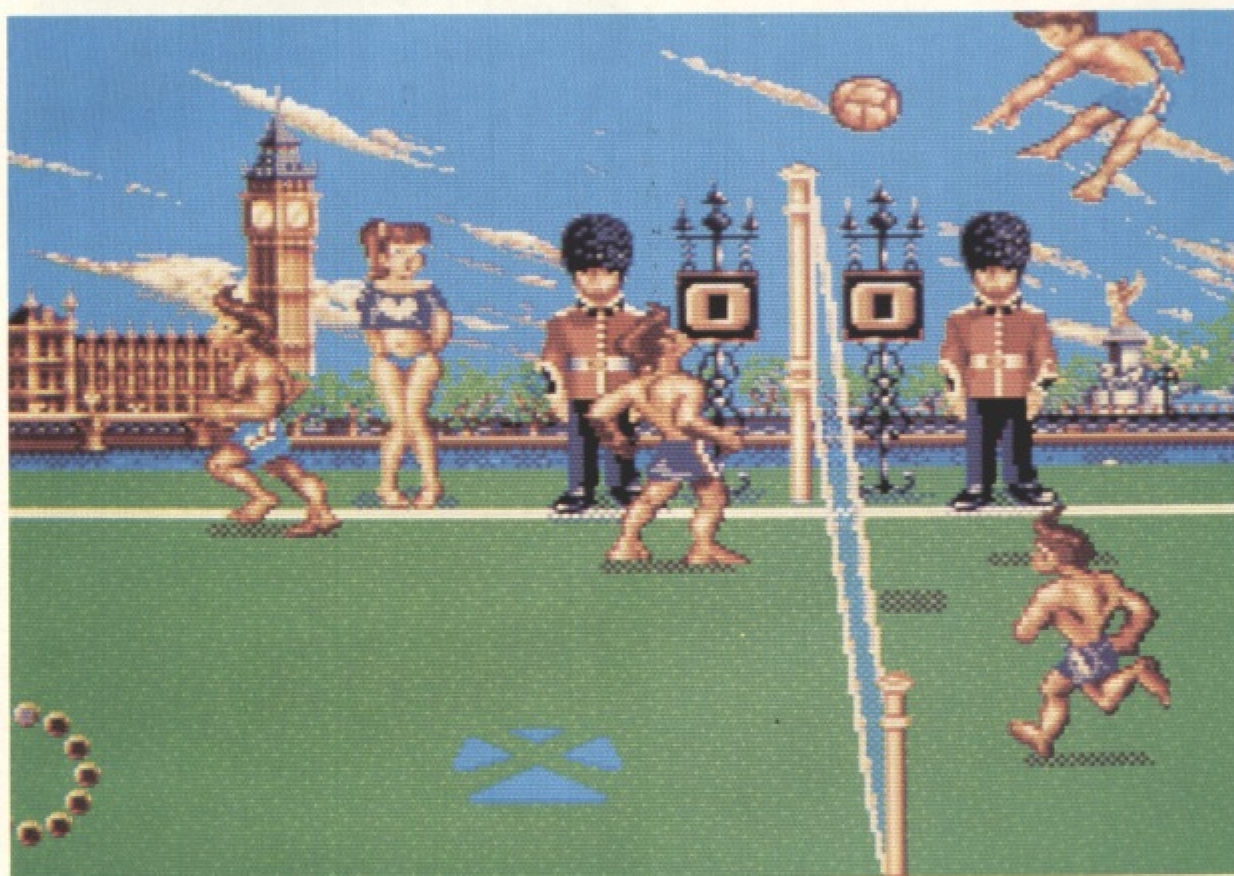
That said, the coverage of the game on home computers has been pretty lame – especially on 16-bit. Electronic Arts' **Kings Of The Beach** is the only one that springs to mind, and coin-op afficionados may remember **Dodgeball**, a futuristic interpretation of the theme which inspired the Bitmap Brothers to write **Speedball**.

Ocean's Beach Volley, put together by Ocean's French programming arm is an attempt to put the situation to rights. The scene is the World Volleyball Championships, and to get your name on the Championship trophy you travel the world, visiting the eight participating countries (including England, Egypt, the USA, The Soviet Union and of course France).

REVIEW

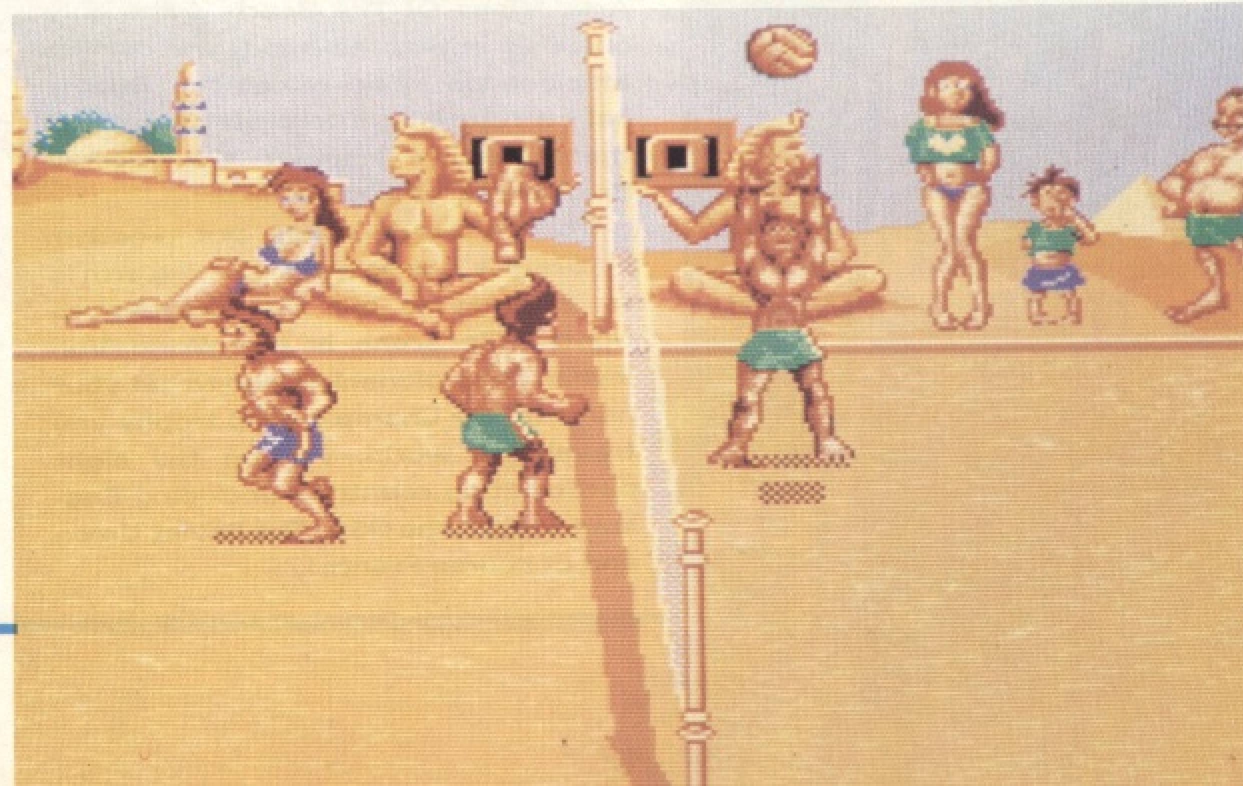
The smash is the ultimate shot, and if you find yourself on the wrong end of one, you're in a world of s#!t. What happens is the ball is passed to the second player who whacks it high into the air. Player one then leaps into the air and 'smashes' the ball down over the net at such an extreme speed and angle that it's almost impossible to return. To aid the defending team a cross-hair plots the estimated impact point of the ball while the attacking team prepares to smash, but even so, lightning reactions are required to save the point.











A The reason why Ocean's Beach Volley is such fun to play is all down to its simplicity – there's no messing here, just straightforward Volleyball action from start to finish. The control mode is tricky to get to grips with, but once you've got the hang of it it's very instinctive – so if you make a mistake you know it's you and not the control method that's at fault. The graphics are of a very high standard and add to the overall feel no end. They're simple enough, but just oozing with style and humour, from the nude models on the beach to the players' quiff hairstyles! Things are equally jolly in the sound department with umpteen heavy rock tunes and catchy jingles coupled with plenty of sampled 'oohs' and 'aahs' adding to the enjoyment. The emphasis here is on fun, and there's certainly more than enough of that on show.

PRICE	£24.95
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	87%
SOUND	89%
PLAYABILITY	86%
VALUE	82%

OVERALL 88%

ST This version is due for release within the next few weeks at a price of £19.95. There aren't expected to be any major differences, apart from a few changes in the colour and sound departments.

PC This is currently under consideration, and if it gets the go-ahead, we should see something by later on in the year or early 1990 at the latest. Stay tuned...

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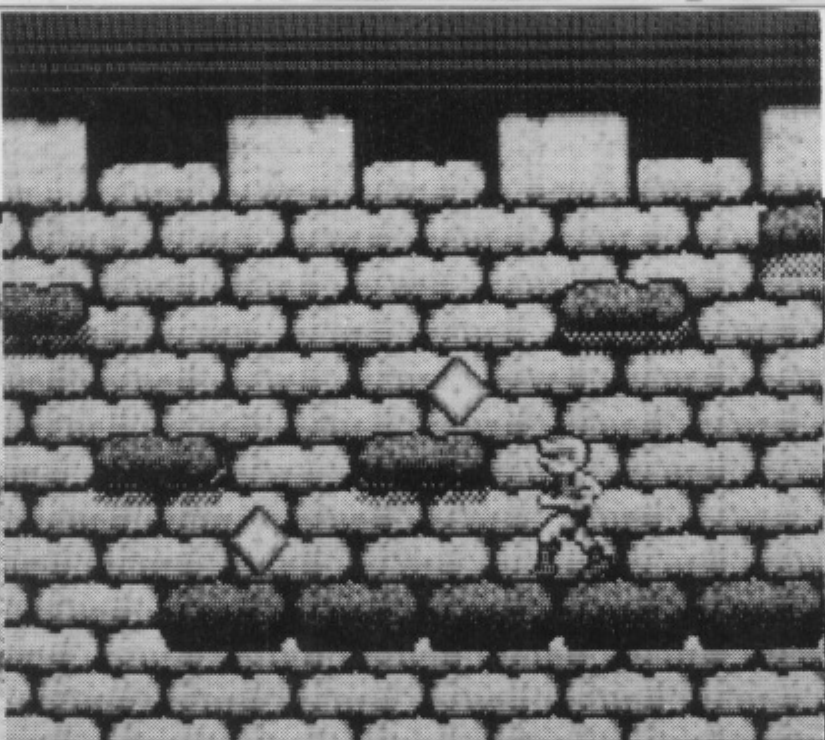
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This is one of those levels on which all those lives you had left really start to fritter away – jumping from one platform to another and collecting all the yellow fuel capsules isn't quite as easy as it looks. There's a very tight time limit, so if you want to avoid premature vapourisation you have to be extremely sure-footed and quick with it.

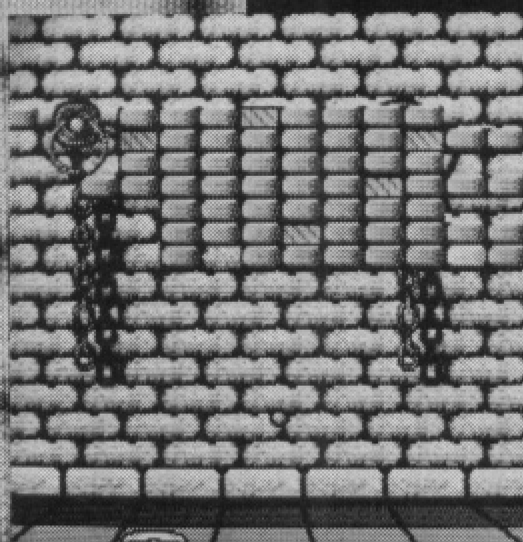
Chario

Kati Hamza gets a run for her money in Impressions' mixed bag.

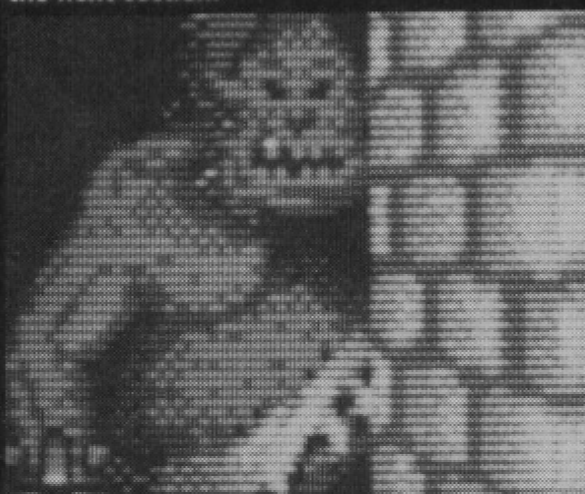
It's that old, old story. Boy meets Girl and they fall in love. Everything's fine and dandy. Then Boy turns his back for five minutes and Girl gets kidnapped by Baron. Under normal circumstances getting Girl back would be hard enough.

Unfortunately you and your true love are separated not by one or two different arcade sequences but by six. And what all that boils down to is a hotch-potch of 30 or so progressively more difficult mini-sections combining all the old favourites: platform game, **Breakout**, **Operation Wolf** horizontal scrolling shoot 'em up and **Asteroids**.

...ots Of Wrath



◀ Hitting the stripy bricks sends different capsules floating towards you. Catch them for a variety of effects, such as double ball, fireball or even a warp to the next section.



▲ This bit's easy. Just position a cursor and blast as fast as you can. Reaction time is the key. the longer it takes to blow a monster away, the less energy you have left.

◀ It's easy enough to reach the first end-of-level guardian but after that the going gets progressively tougher. The shoot 'em up sections, which actually count as two of the six different sub-sections, not one as you might expect, are Chariots Of Wrath's most demanding parts.

▼ Each game section gets you that little bit nearer the Baron's stronghold and your one true love. As for where you are now – x marks the spot!



◀ Shoot the black weapon pods and picking up the capsules they release to transform your modest little pea shooter into massive multi-firing laser guns, with outriders and wing extensions. Sadly, the best weapons tend not to last too long.

ST

Original it may not be, but for a game which consists wholly of golden oldies bundled together (an older brother for the likes of Lazy Jones – remember those?) Chariots Of Wrath turns out to be surprisingly enjoyable. Somehow you can't resist waiting to see what comes next. What's obvious from the start though, is that some of the sub-sections have a lot more substance than others. For example, there's really not that much to the Breakout game: a greater variety of bonus capsules wouldn't go amiss. The shoot 'em up action on the other hand, has enough different alien formations and weapons to ensure frenetic and rewarding gameplay. As some arcade sections are much easier to complete than others, you end up playing the same levels over and over again only to find yourself dying on a really tough one. A password system would definitely have improved long-term playability. For hours of addictive, old-fashioned entertainment though, you can't fault Chariots Of Wrath.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	75%
SOUND	49%
PLAYABILITY	75%
VALUE	50%

OVERALL 68%

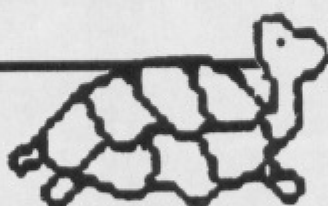
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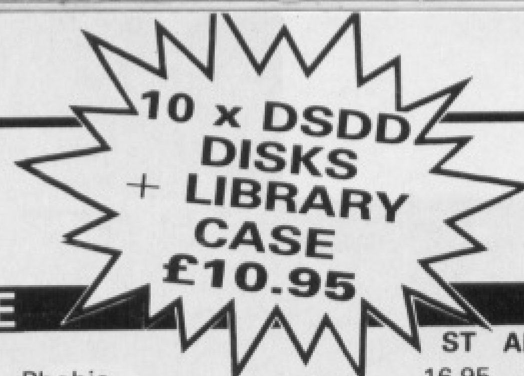
There should be few noticable differences between this and the ST version – in fact, it should be in the shops by the time you read this. Not surprisingly, it also costs £24.99.

PC

Oh dear. No news is good news, and unfortunately there is news for PC owners... Impressions has no plans to convert Chariots Of Wrath to the MS-DOS compatibles.

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Xenon II

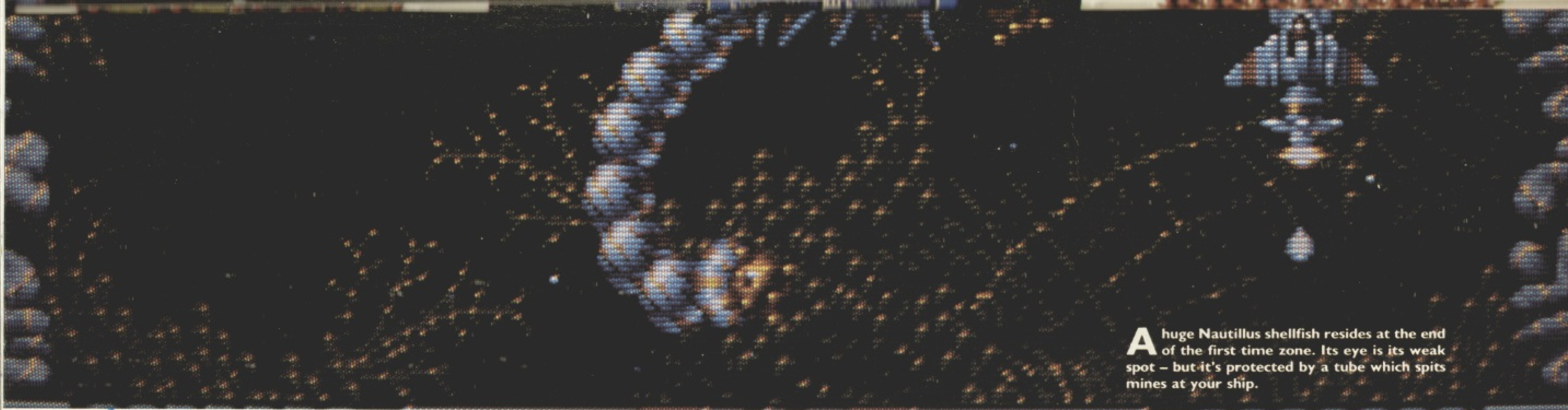
Megablast

Since its appearance on Channel 4's Signals in January and our Work In Progress feature in April, Brian Nesbitt's had sleepless nights waiting for the Bitmap's definitive blaster. Now he can't sleep for playing it.

The Xenites are back. The very fabric of time is in danger and only you can prevent a universal catastrophe. Don't worry though, this is only an excuse for destruction on a very grand scale through five vertically scrolling levels.

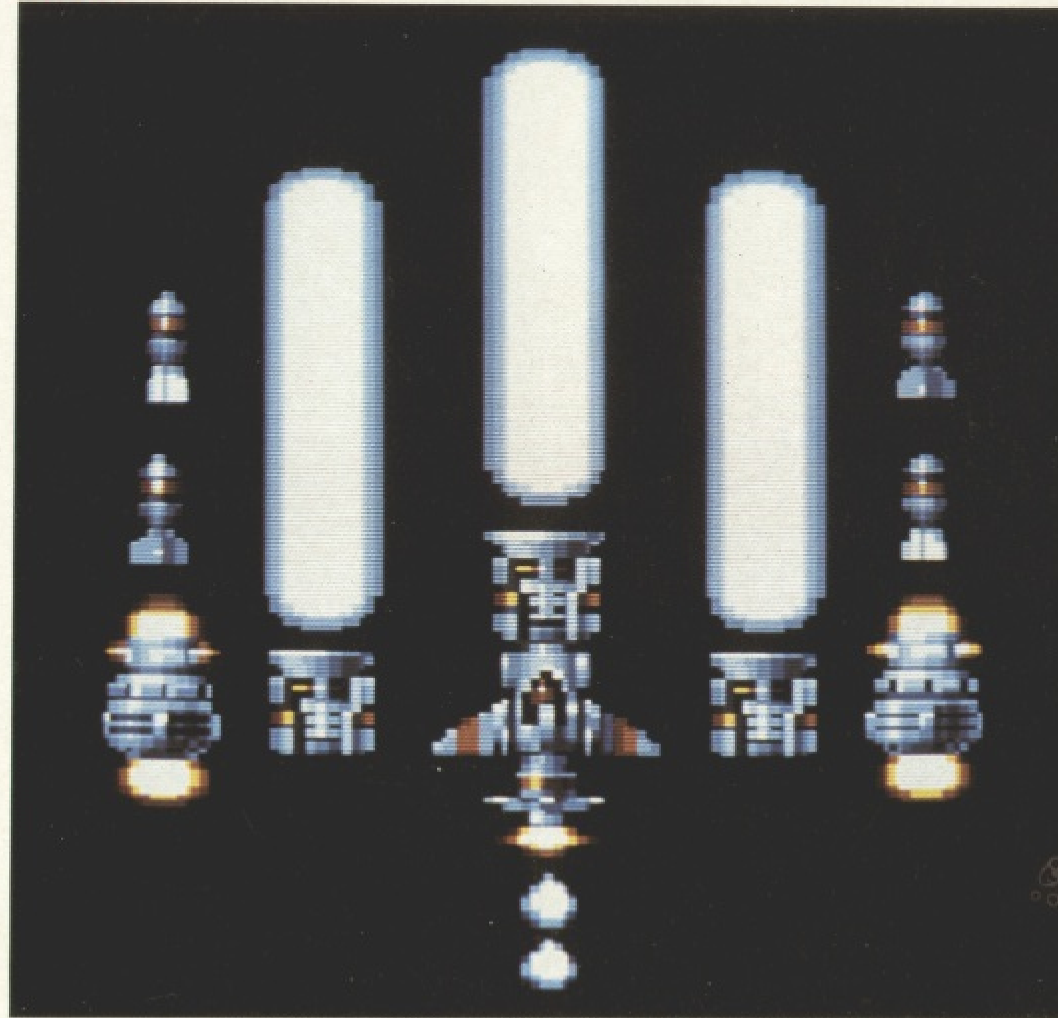
Each of these levels represents a distinct time zone, incorporating the process of evolution, starting from the lowest form of life in pre-prehistoric times through to metallic mayhem in the spaceways of centuries to come.

Level One is fairly straightforward to get you in the swing of things. Pick up a couple of Speed-Ups, a rear-firing laser and a dart-firing cannon as you take on millipedes, trilobytes and an assortment of bizarre beings.



A huge Nautillus shellfish resides at the end of the first time zone. Its eye is its weak spot – but it's protected by a tube which spits mines at your ship.

Equipment includes extra speed, extra energy, a dive feature, allowing the ship to move 'in' and 'out' of the screen (useful for negotiating cluttered, unknown terrain), plus plenty of sexy bolt-on items such as rear-, side- and fore-mounted cannons, the power of which can be beefed up, a flame-thrower and bullet-spitting orbitals. But perhaps the swishest piece of hardware is the Nashwan Power, a devilish 'taster' device which provides a glimpse of things to come... a full 10 seconds of total destructive power!





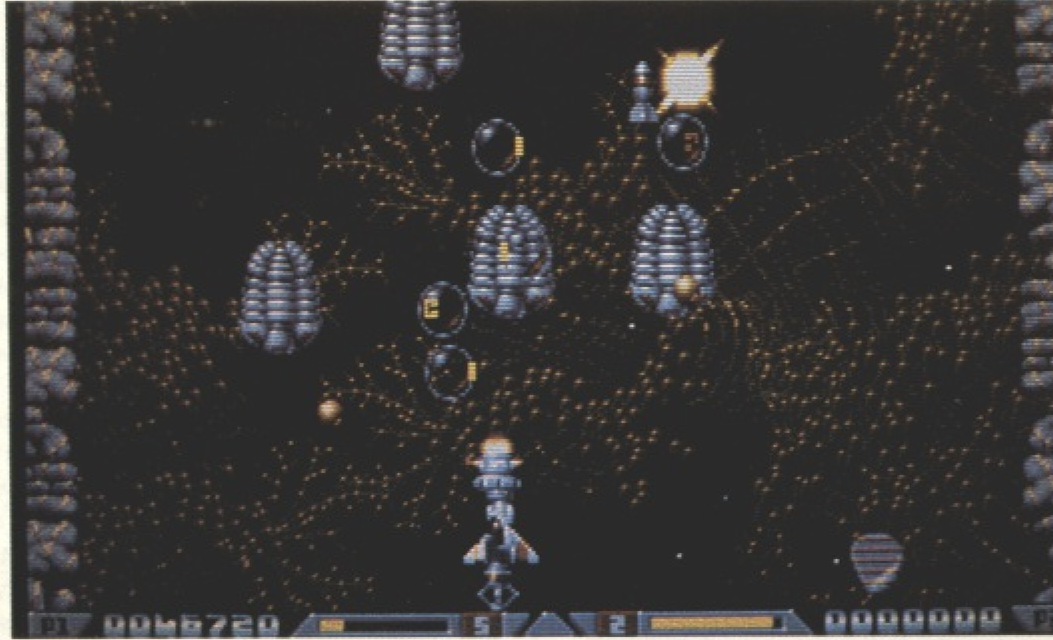
Megablasters are given two opportunities per level to buy or sell equipment (once halfway through a level and again at the end). Over two-dozen articles are in stock, but only those within reach of your bank balance are displayed in the bank of video screens to the left.

The shopkeeper strokes its chin in thought as it ponders a price for your used equipment.

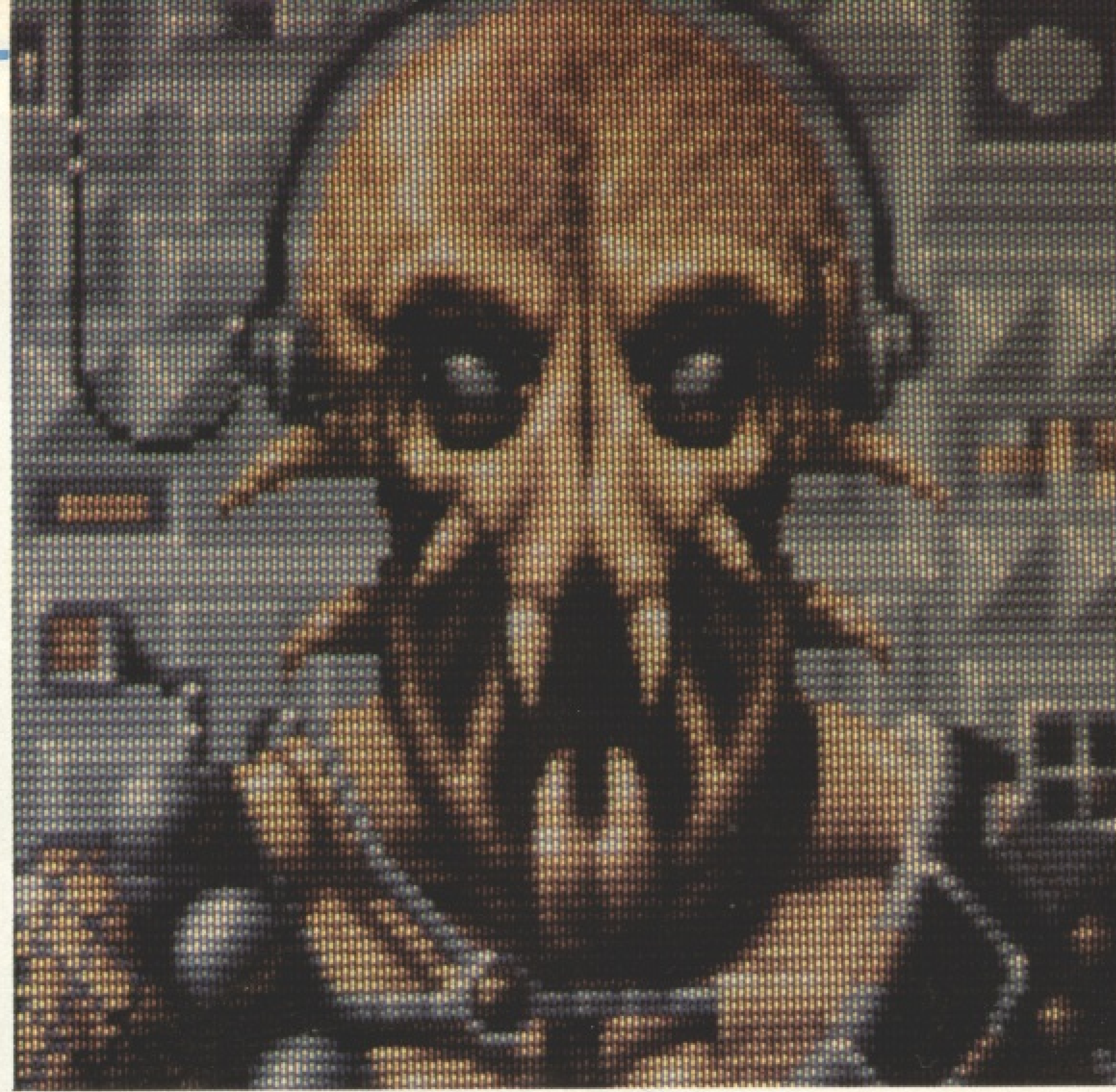




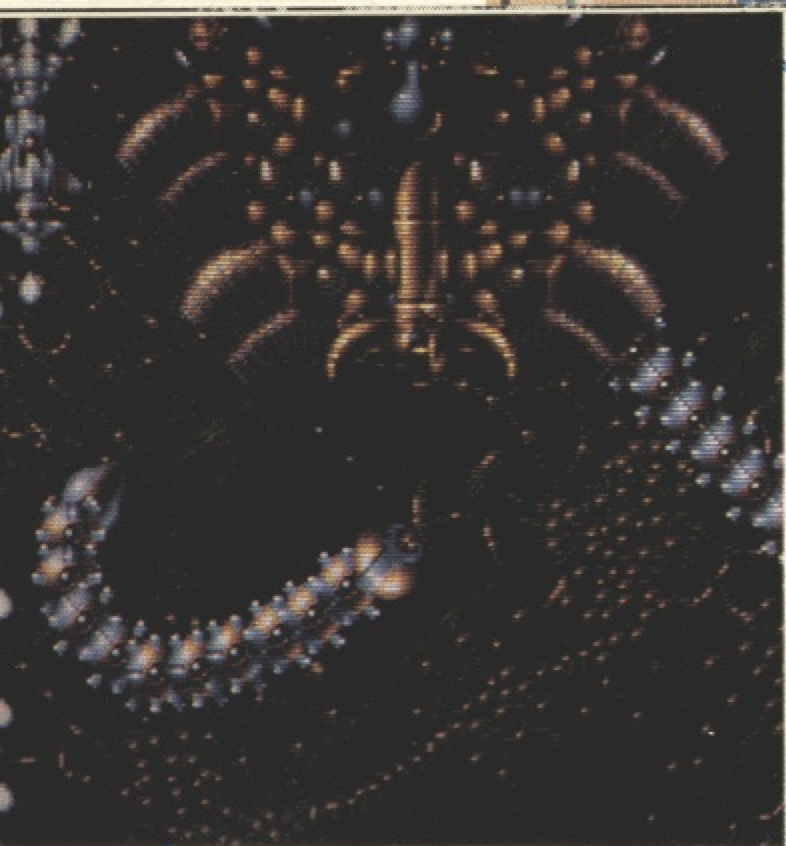
Equip the ship by collecting tokens left by capsules which occasionally make their way across the screen. Alternatively you can kill for cash and consequently enhance the ship by paying a visit to your local shop.



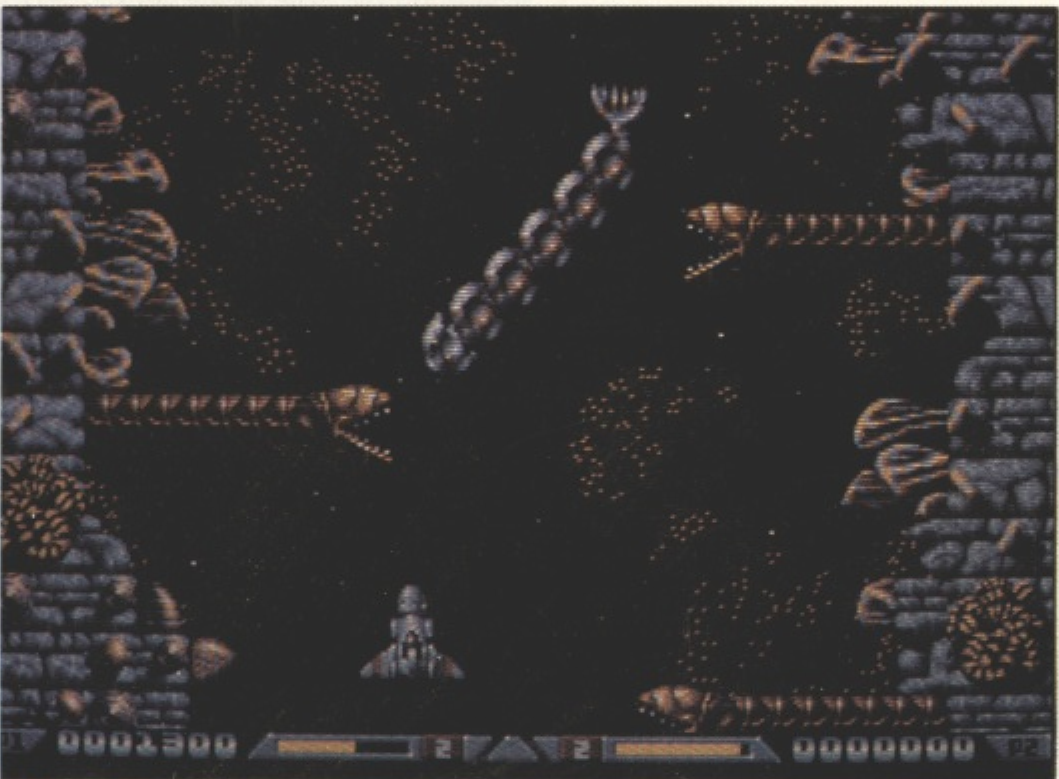
Money comes in the form of Real Cash, which is left behind whenever you erradicate a wave of aliens. The size of the aliens determines the cash's value.



Meet the owner of the shop, a beautifully drawn and animated creature with an unpronouncable name for whom money is an only friend. On entering the shop a burst of Megablast emits from the creature's Walkman, until it reaches up and turns the volume down and begins to talk. Fortunately its garbled speech is translated in the window below, otherwise you'd never guess it was a shrewd dealer whose advice (playing tips) costs (and even then it's been known to be unreliable!). It never buys a weapon for more than half its original worth, even if its one previous owner was a sweet little old terran!



Not content with one large being to blast at each level's end, there are big boys to battle halfway through the last four levels, just before you visit the shop. Snake-like creatures slide in and out of the tubes attached to this grotesque three screen long beast found on Level Two. How you dispose of it to progress is for you to discover.



Traditionally vertically scrolling shoot 'em ups are more claustrophobic than the horizontal variety. However in Xenon II the facility to reverse scroll the screen by a few lines effectively increases the size of the play area.



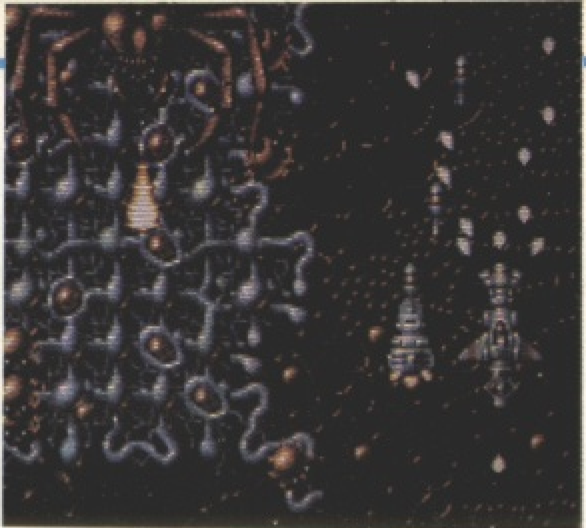
Programmer John Smith is taking advantage of the Blitter for a smoother ride. And David Whittaker's used the Amiga's sound chip to produce quite outstanding soundtrack – some would say considerably better than the ST's, but relatively speaking the two are identical. Priced at £24.99 and due for release at the same time as the Atari version, Amiga Megablast is a must.



Work is underway and MS-DOS owners can expect to see a finished product later in September. The second layer of parallax is unlikely to make an appearance and VGA compatibility is at the time of writing uncertain. One thing's for sure: the playability is likely to survive intact.



Three planes of parallax move at different speeds and generate a remarkable feeling of depth on each level. But the detailed scenery isn't there just to be admired, oh no. More often than not it comprises or houses the nastier creatures (like the worms which slither in and out of the throbbing tubes in the centre), and on later stages things become a little more maze-like.



This giant bullet-spitting arachnoid is found at Level Two's end. It produces baby spiders, which rebuild the strands of web which you inconsiderately destroy.



From the moment the incredible David Whittaker reconstruction of Bomb The Bass' Megablast bursts into life you know you are in for something special. Credits and player messages slide 'in' and 'out' of the screen against an impressive three dimensional starfield and already the adrenalin is flowing. Then the destruction begins. And how! Xenon II certainly lives up to its subtitle. The Megablast bass-line throbs away and you soon find yourself wasting wave after wave of aliens in time to the beat. The array of weaponry is impressive, offering the flexibility to experiment and develop your own style of play. And best of all, you don't lose all your hardware when you die, which means the action never reverts to the realms of unplayability. Xenon II will undoubtedly have the same effect on the games scene as its predecessor did over a year ago.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	September
GRAPHICS	96%
SOUND	93%
PLAYABILITY	94%
VALUE	85%

OVERALL 93%

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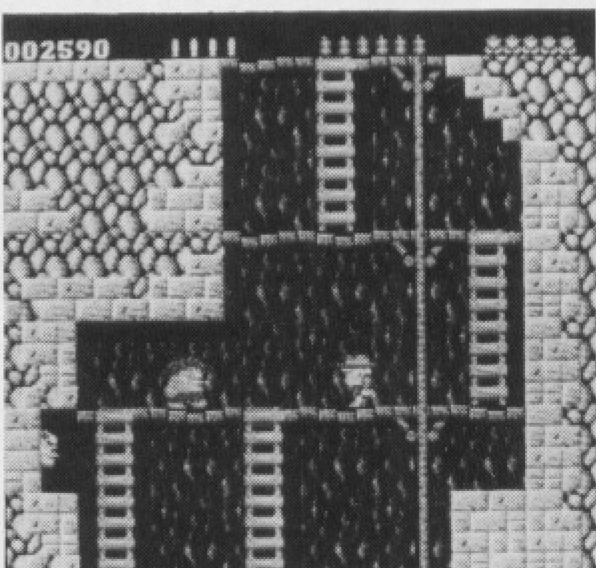
RICK DANGEROUS

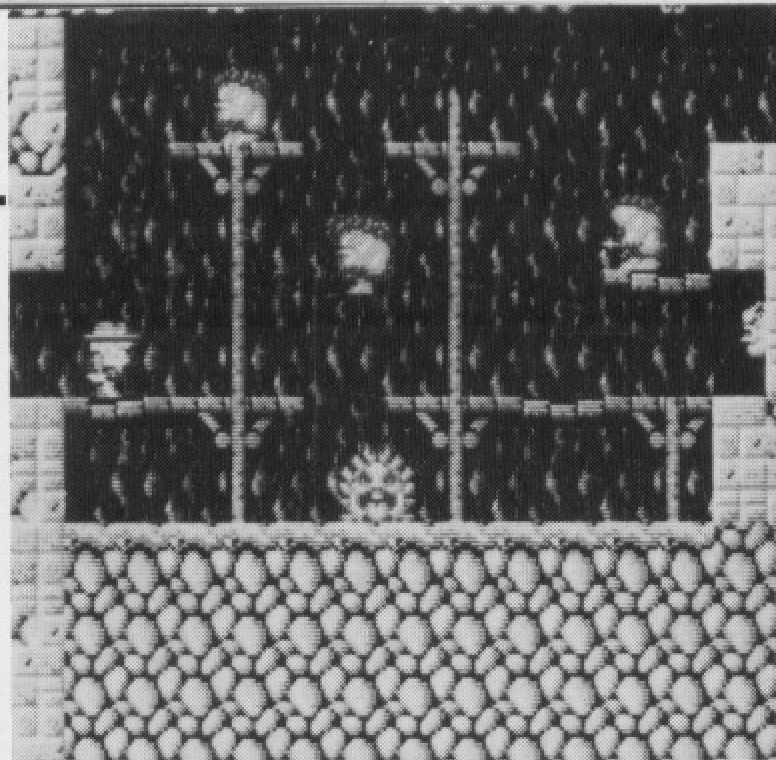
Firebird

Kevin Norburn and Simon Phipps of Core Design not only designed the game, they also put together this useful cache of tips.

Keep running away from the rolling boulder and pull to the right on the final fall. In this way you miss both the patrolling Goolu and the boulder. Get off the screen as quickly as possible, as the quicker you complete this first section, the more bonus points you get.

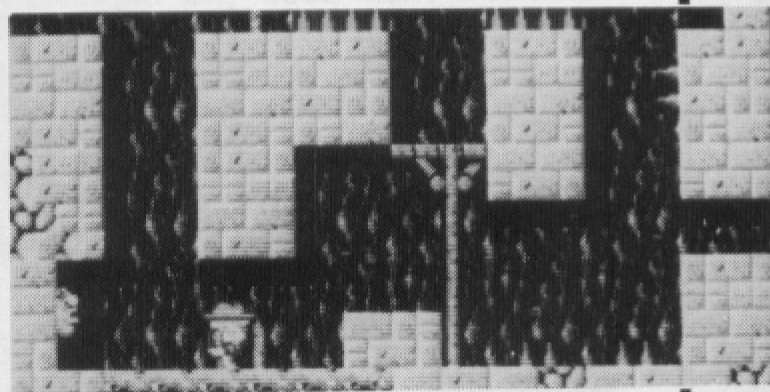
Dodge the second Goolu by falling off the ladder (rather than climbing down it) and running away from him. The third Goolu may also be followed – quickly go down the first ladder you reach as you follow him, since the furthest ladder will lead you into the path of a blow dart.

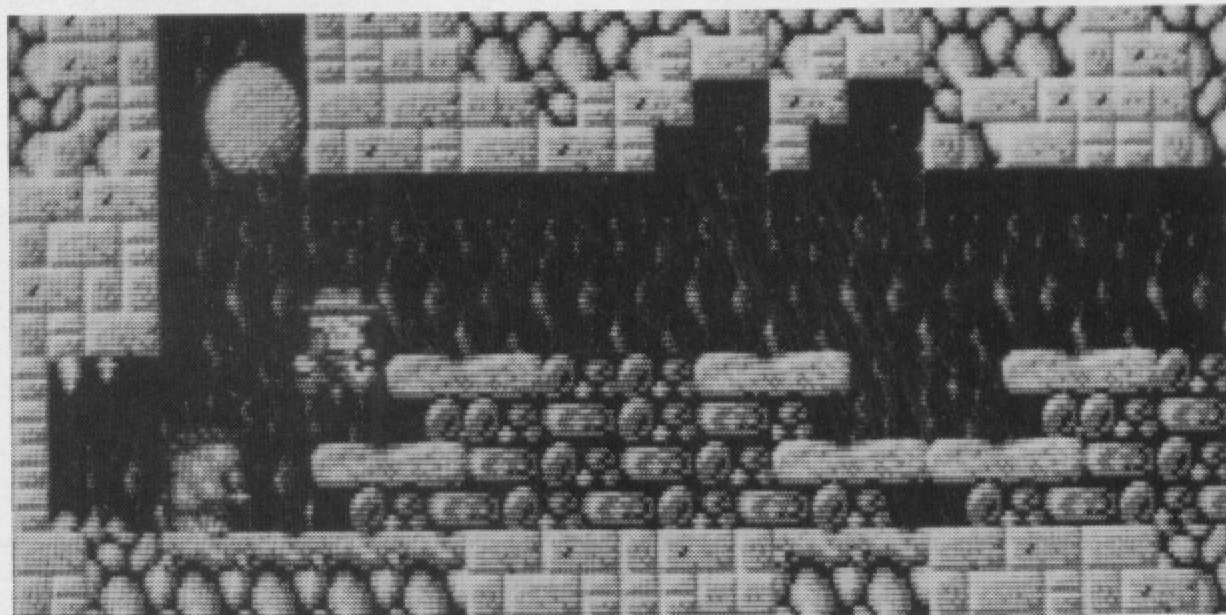




Kill all the Goolus with bullets as they fall – don't let any one of them reach the bottom of the screen. Jump down to just below your entrance point (you will hear a ping) and then run over to the bottom right corner of the screen (a fanfare will sound and you'll receive a bonus of around 2,000 points). The faster you make it to the bottom right corner, the higher the bonus you get.

When you enter this screen, fall straight down. Touch the wooden pole at the bottom of the screen and run left quickly to avoid the flying rock. When it stops, jump on it to get onto the wooden platform, which will disable the spike trap to your left. Jump up and to the left to touch the second wooden pole and disable the right spike trap. Wait until the block returns to its place of origin, jump down onto it and exit.







Kill the first Goolu with a bullet and jump from the first step to collect the mask. Don't stand on the platform it stands on, as this will trigger a blow dart.

IN GENERAL . . .

- Always use the gun to kill enemies across gaps or where an instant response is needed.
- Use dynamite where you can – this saves bullets and it may be able to kill more enemies than a bullet, which only counts as a single hit.
- Use the stick to hold back several enemies at a time, then drop some dynamite and run away. This is a good way of killing more than one enemy when you are short of ammo. It also piles on the points, as a dynamite kill scores twice as highly as a bullet.
- The stick also comes in useful when a long pixel-perfect jump is required. Use it to stop Rick on the very edge of a platform, get ready to jump by pointing at a diagonal and release the fire button to jump. This will always see you to the other side safely.
- Be careful when using the gun or dynamite where there is extra ammunition in close range – it may be blown up by accident.
- Beware of the mummies on level 2 and guard dogs on level 3 – bullets and dynamite cannot stop them and must be avoided instead.
- Push up when you land on 'bouncy' floors – this gives extra height to your jumps.
- Whenever you see a stone sculpture, snake head or whatever, DUCK! These will often fire blow darts.

TIPS

LICENCE TO KILL

Domark

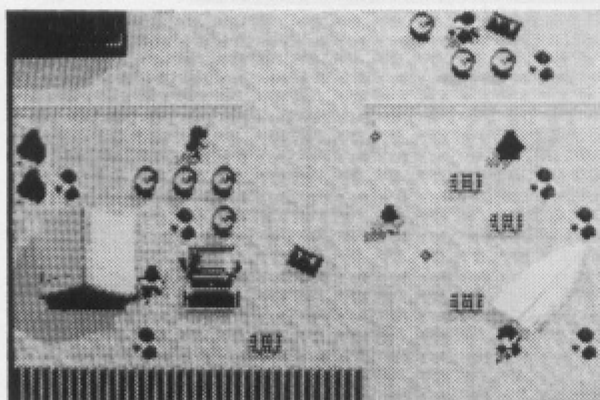
LEVEL ONE

In the first scene, your objective is to destroy the escaping jeep as quickly as possible – if you can do this it won't appear on the following section, making life a little easier. The best tactic is to go into an all-out attack as soon as the level begins and hope to knock the jeep out before you enter the territory guarded by Sanchez's men. Remember that while you can fire all the time, your shots will only hit the jeep while you are accelerating (ie the nose is pointing down). Try and keep in line with the jeep and never stray off the road, where Sanchez's men pose the biggest threat.



LEVEL TWO

The important thing to remember here is although this section looks like a straightforward shoot 'em up, it doesn't play that way, so gung-ho Commando style tactics will only get you shot. For a start, never run out into the open if you can avoid it – it's safer to stick close to the walls where you're best covered from enemy fire. Take your time – there's no limit, and Sanchez will escape no matter how quickly you reach the end. By running up to the enemy you can force them to run away, but this won't get rid of them – they'll just reappear later on.



To dispense with the gunmen, cunning is the name of the game. Set your crosshair while behind a building, and in one swift motion, run out, let rip and run back to cover. With this technique you should sustain the minimum of damage. A more satisfying (but bullet-consuming method) is to repeatedly shoot an oil drum – this causes it to explode, taking everybody in the vicinity with it.



LEVEL THREE

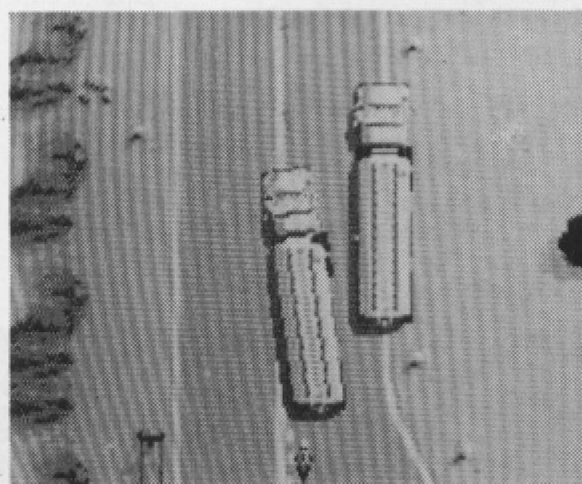
Grabbing the tail of Sanchez's plane is possibly the toughest task in the entire game. Bond can't grab hold while the plane is obscured by a cloud, so try to stay in the clear sky as much as possible. The fire button will attach the tow cable if Bond is within range, but don't do it when you're directly over the plane – hit it a second before – this allows for reaction time.

LEVEL FOUR

Make use of Bond's two swimming modes – over and underwater. Stay underwater while there are boats and snipers on the screen, and surface as soon as any divers appear. Keep this up and you shouldn't be troubled. But remember that your oxygen level is limited and you'll be forced to the surface when it runs out. As time is of the essence, make acquiring a harpoon by stabbing a diver priority one.



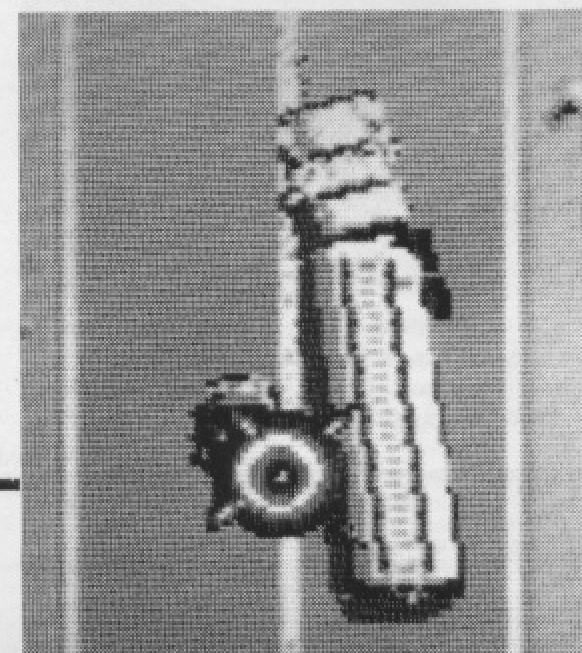
Once the harpoon is affixed to the seaplane, make your way up the line as fast as you can. If you hang around too long the water becomes treacherously riddled with rocks. Watch the movement of the plane and try to follow it – the further you are from the plane, the more violently it will jerk you.



LEVEL FIVE

Making the jump from the cropduster to the first truck is easy – clouds don't play a part so it's a helluva lot simpler than the third level. Once you're inside the truck you come under attack from the other trucks and also jeeps. Destroying the trucks is achieved by repeatedly ramming them into the roadside. After a while the truck's trailer dislocates and is left behind, but the rig still poses a threat – this has to be knocked out too to completely destroy the truck.

Jeeps may look pretty puny, but they fire deadly Stinger missiles. To avoid being hit, try to stay out of line with the jeeps as much as you can. To destroy them, just drive over them. Four wheels are no match for 18!



WICKED

Cross Brian Nesbitt's palm with silver and he'll tell your fortune. . .The One's resident champ teams up vith Binary Vision to play the zodiac game.





BIAS

Selecting a gameplay style from one of the three available is important. Experiment with them and decide which is the best for you. The Tactical Bias makes the evil growth more intelligent than usual, while the guardians are quite tame. In addition your craft is slower, but more maneouvrable than usual. In Arcade mode the evil growth is quite stupid, but the guardians are vicious sods. The added inertia on the craft makes things a little tougher. The standard mix falls somewhere between the two and is a beginner's best bet.

STAYING ALIVE ... GENERAL GAMEPLAY

Keep an ear out for the siren that sounds when an evil spore is created, as this is your only warning of their appearance (it's almost impossible to spot them visually). As soon as the siren sounds, drop whatever you're doing and concentrate on wiping out the spore before it turns into a portal.

Establish a base as soon as possible. Find an area which is (comparatively) easy to defend and select this as your base (or 'Beachhead' as it's technically known). This can be used as the central point from which to expand across the screen. The best place to set up shop is in a corner, as this provides the best defence.

Einkreisungspolitik! This isn't gibberish, but a German military phrase meaning 'encirclement strategy'. We English refer to it as pincer moverment, and it works just as well in **Wicked** as it did in World War II. Surround the enemy and make him fight on as many fronts as possible by scattering good portals all over the screen.

Kill off pockets of evil growth close to your portals as soon as you can. Otherwise an evil spore might settle there and overrun your portals. Remember – evil spores can only settle on existing evil growth.

Don't just shoot evil growth willy-nilly. Good marksmanship is the key to success. The most effective method is to shoot out a pathway of evil growth from your good portals to his evil ones. As good growth can only cover dead evil growth, it is channelled between the living evil growth towards his portals. NEVER shoot evil growth that doesn't represent a threat. It just wastes time.

All portals produce a limited amount of growth. Once they have done this they continue sporing but stop growing. Look out for evil portals that have exhausted their growth – they are far easier to knock out.

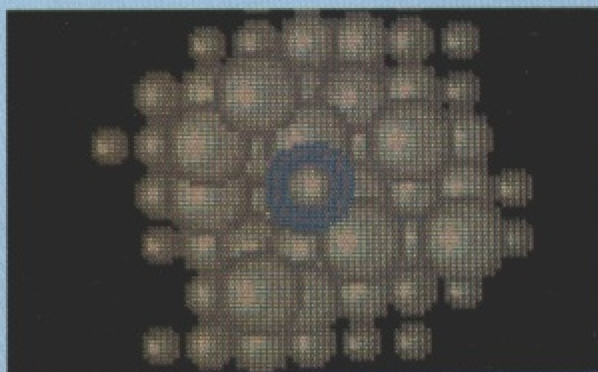
Stay cool when the drum/ heartbeat sounds to indicate that time is running out. Although a screen may look even more daunting when there's little time left, remember that by now most evil portals will have stopped growing. If the time runs out and the screen is filled with evil portals, stand by to protect yourself from the guardian. If you're caught out, you'll lose another life to him in the second or so before you lose the screen.

Experienced players should skip the first two constellations at the Eye of Infinity and jump straight in at the deep end. You can come back to these later to gain easy extra lives and – if you prefer – you can play them for a bit of light relief while in the middle of a tough conquest.

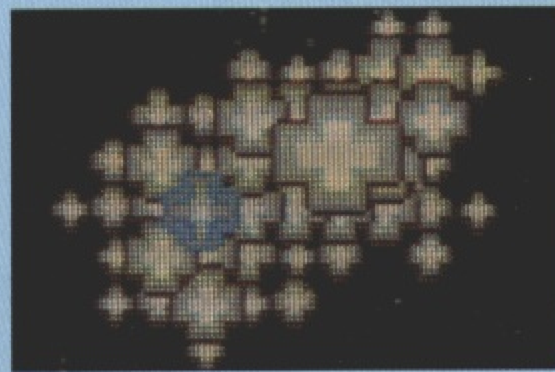


GROWTHS

The growth's intelligence is represented by its shape. The more intelligent the growth, the harder it is to wipe out, and the more damage it does to your portals. For the more intelligent growth, the best tactic is to surround the evil portals with your own, thereby cutting down their avenues of growth.

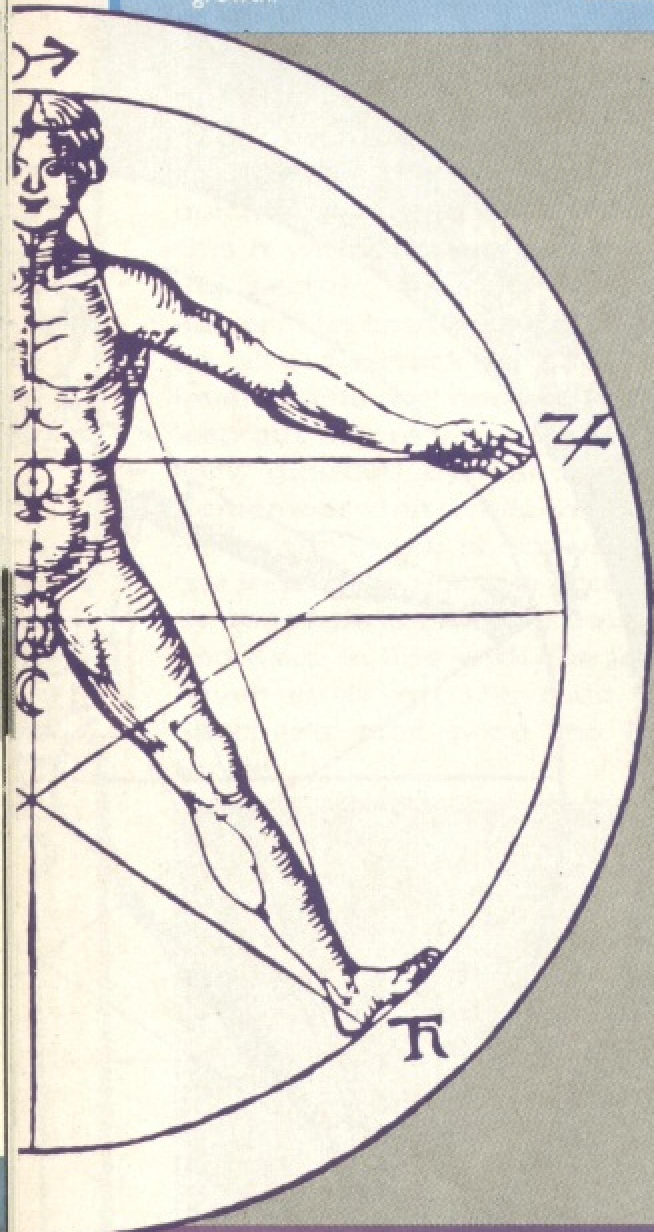


Round growth is the least intelligent. About 95% grows in random directions, with only the remaining 5% showing any intelligence



Cross-shaped growth is pretty smart. About 50% grows randomly, and the other half intelligently. this is where the problems start . . .





PICK A CARD

The only way to find out what each Tarot card represents is to try 'em and see, but a general rule of thumb is: if the card represents

Reduces the amount of time left. This may not sound so bad, but if you inadvertently collect a couple of these, you'll soon find yourself in an impossible situation.

Causes the guardian and all its servants to home in on you like there's no tomorrow. Avoid!

Doesn't kill you, as you may think. In Tarot terminology, the Death card symbolises rebirth, so instead of losing a life, you're awarded an extra one!

The worst card of the lot. This causes an explosion of evil growth all over the screen, and there's nothing you can do to stop it.



BONUSES

As well as points awarded for completing constellations, killing guardians etc, there are a couple of extra bonuses to be found.

- A small bonus is awarded for shooting the power crystals thrown out by the Tarot cards. So if you're not interested in the power on offer, obliterate it instead.
- You're not allowed more than four lives, so if you already have four and an extra life crystal appears, collect it and a large points bonus is awarded instead.

GUARDIANS

Each of the 36 screens is protected by its own guardian, and learning how to defend yourself from these is the key to survival. Remember each guardian is protected by a band of 'servants' and the patterns and habits of these must also be learned.

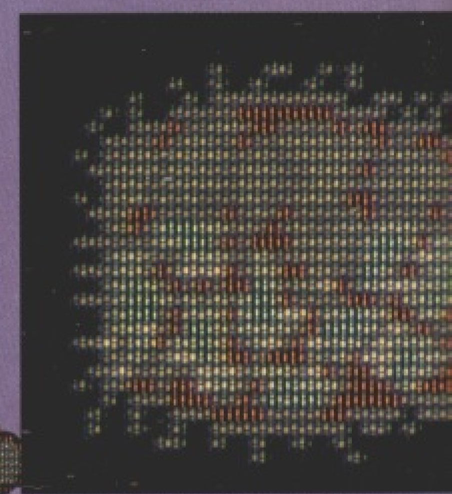
This creature's pattern is a predictable, but so fast its almost impossible to avoid. The eight mini-shurikens it constantly fires add to the difficulty. Run away as quickly as possible.



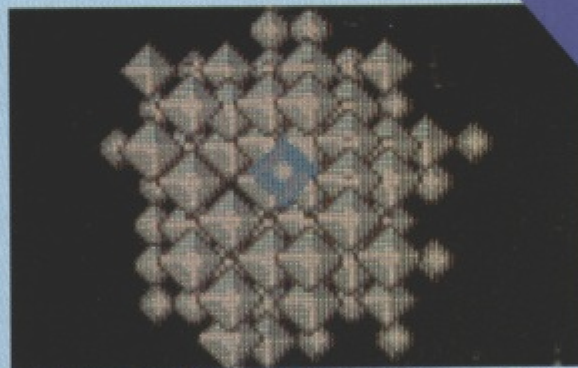
The firefly itself doesn't pose too much of a problem – it flies in a predictable spiral pattern, but its servants aren't quite as simple. They fly out three times at diagonals, but horizontally and vertically on the fourth. Once this pattern is mastered, it's easy to work out where the next wave of servants will be going and be ready to avoid it.



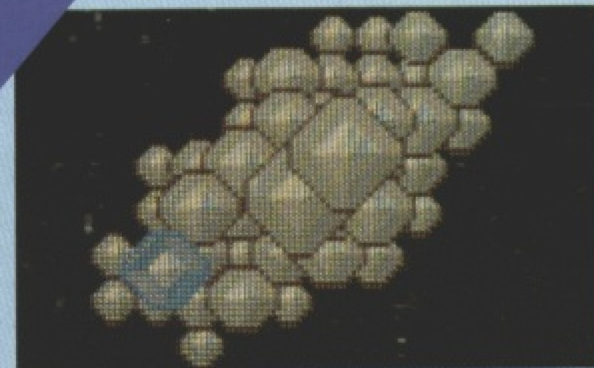
The maggot may at f once you've sussed hi appears at the far left of the scree your advantage. When the maggo centre of the screen and wait. Whe of fire. Let him have it!







Diamond shaped growth is slightly more intelligent but still pretty dim. The ratio of random-intelligent growth is roughly 80/20.



The octagonal growth is the worst of the lot. A mammoth 90% of it grows intelligently, with only 10% growing in random directions. A real killer.

ANY CARD

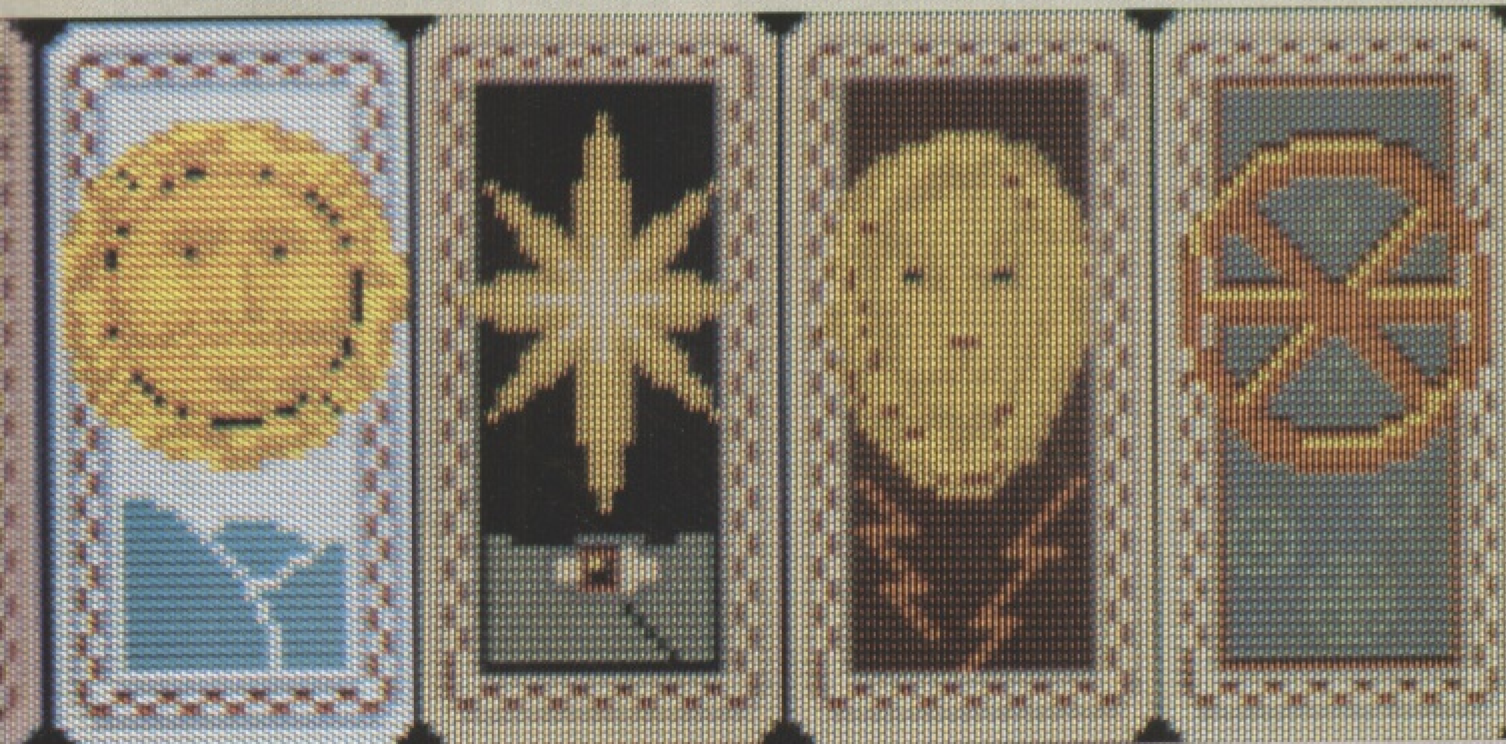
something bad, don't collect it and vice versa (this is where a basic knowledge of Tarot comes in handy!).

Awards eigth - way multifire for a limited time. Ideal for wiping out large areas of evil growth.

Increases your firepower by adding a multiple. Two can be collected, and are most useful for speedy disposal of guardians.

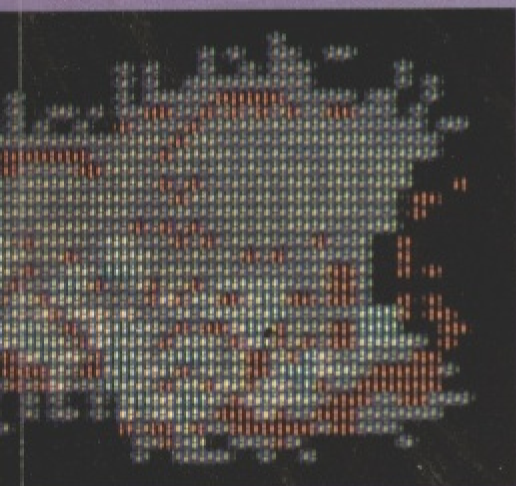
Awards invulnerability for a limited time.

Swaps the position of the indicator on your energy meter, so a very low power level becomes a very high one and vice versa.





...rs: seem to be the hardest guardian, but ...s habits he's the easiest to fool. He always ...n, in line with you. You can exploit this to ...t disappears during the day, get into the ...n he reappears he'll be directly in your line

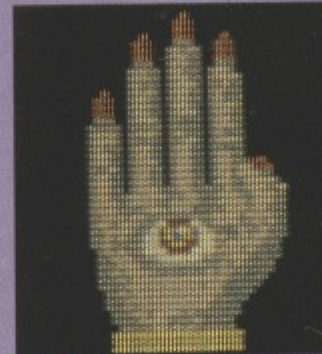




The spider's servants move in a circular motion towards you and have to be hit twice to kill. They don't pose too much of a problem so it's often best to leave them alone and get on with the job in hand, but on later levels they home in on you at an alarming rate and need to be dealt with immediately.

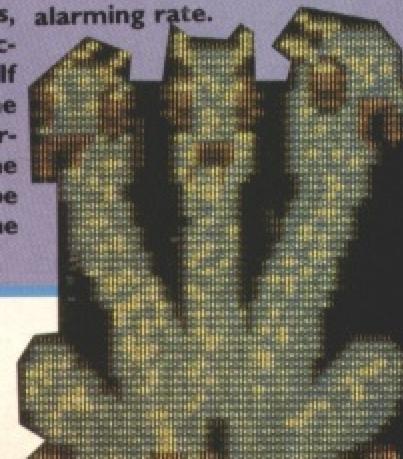
The Devil's servants are arguably the hardest to deal with. You can avoid them by running away, but this is time (and energy) consuming. To shoot them, retreat to a safe distance, wait for them to come into your line of fire and blow 'em away.

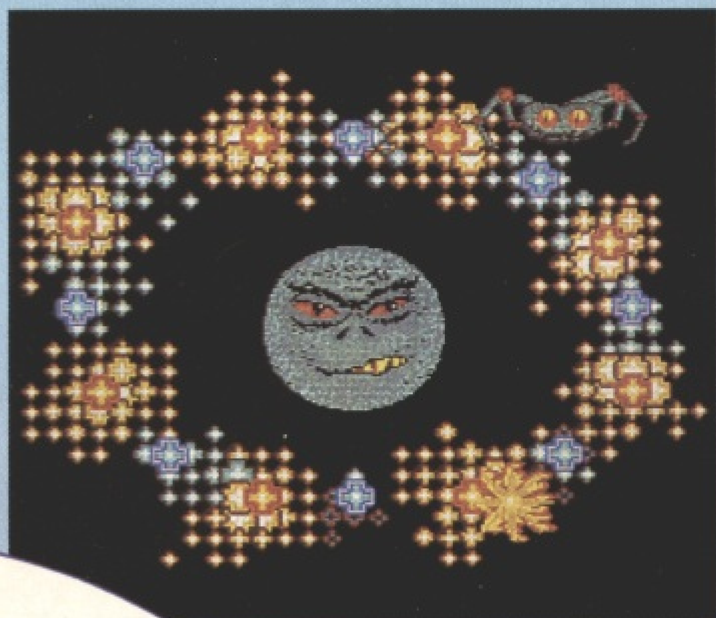




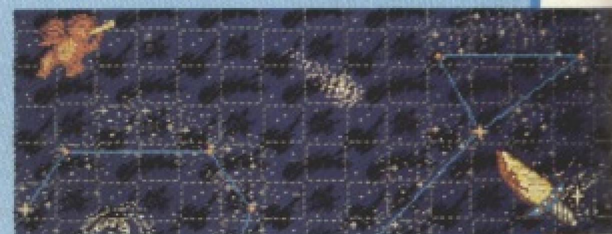
The hand produces spinning silver stars, which require swift action in order to avoid. If you leave them alone they multiply like bacteria and before long the whole screen will be swimming with the things.

Moves in a simple circular pattern, firing six servants at a time, two from each of its three heads. These need to be hit twice to destroy them. If they're not too close it's best to leave them be and concentrate on the job in hand they will soon disappear. But on very high levels they close in on you at an alarming rate.





Establish your base at the upper-central part of the screen and decide on which way to concentrate your growth – either to the left or right. Forget about your two portals at the bottom – you have to work your way round to the bottom anyway so there's no point in rushing down to protect them.

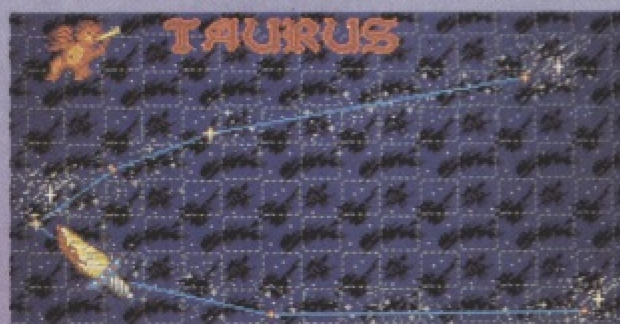


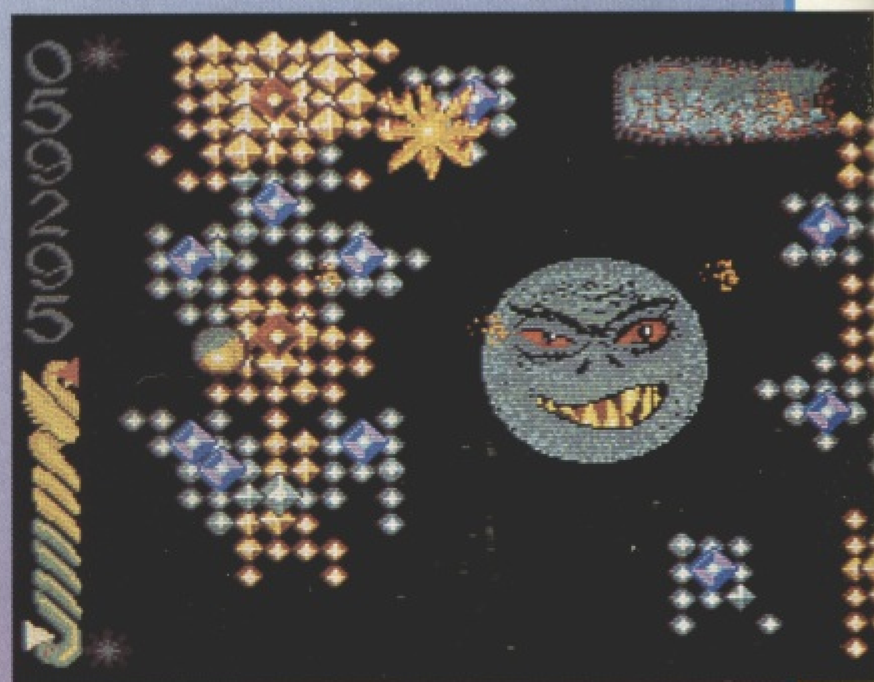


TACTICS

There are certain screens that pose unique problems, and there are specific tactics that can be used for each . . .

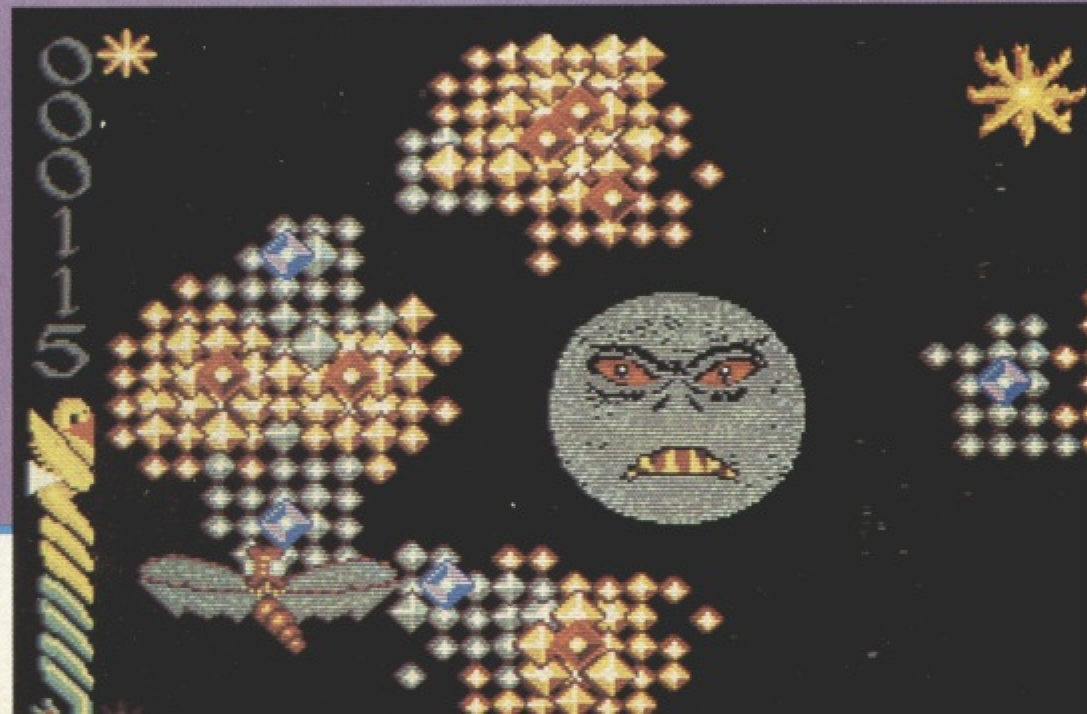
Things are starting to get a little too hot to handle now. Watch out for the 'high power' portals that appear on these higher levels. They look like regular portals but grow at an accelerated rate. The good portal at the top left of this screen is one of these – it grows at triple the ordinary speed making it the obvious choice for your base. On even higher levels there are evil high-power portals as well as good ones, and the only way to spot them is to watch the damage they do.





This screen is ideal for practising the 'beachhead' tactic. The left of the screen is the easiest to defend, and so this is where you should establish your base. In addition you should place a second, smaller base on the right to use as a cushion to fall back on should things go wrong. Concentrate on expanding your base, but keep an eye on the right side as well – you should have the evil growth smothered in no time.





TIPS

XYBOTS

Domark

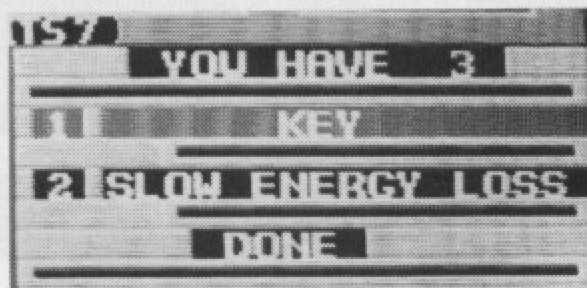
Teque's Jim Tripp has put together a selection of handy hints to get you started.

- Although it's tempting to split up and take separate routes around the maze in two-player mode, don't. One of the biggest advantages of the two-player game is the ability to protect each other when under fire. When you and your mate are at opposite ends of the complex, this isn't easy!
- It's possible to hit a Xybot even if you can't see it. Often you'll see laser fire coming at you from the end of a corridor, but can't see where it's coming from. The reason for this is the Xybot that's firing at you is shrouded in darkness. Rather than venture forward to get a closer look (and risk getting shot at even more), fire instead into the darkness, and aim for the source of the incoming laser fire. More often than not the Xybot will be destroyed.
- There are shortcuts to later levels to be found, but they're well hidden. Levels one and four contain shortcuts to level seven. All you have to do is find them . . .
- When your energy limit is raised to 125%, you must be especially careful not to let it drop too low. If you do, the limit returns to 100%
- When in doubt, shoot! Some walls are fragile and explode to reveal a hidden exitway, coins or other bonuses. There are plenty of these on level eight, so blast around and see what you can find.

▲ A handy way to dispose of Xybots is to lure one behind the other. Xybots aren't particularly intelligent and in this formation they'll quickly shoot each other!

▼ The columns, drums and other obstacles aren't just there for show. They provide essential defence against Xybot fire. Use them to hide behind when the going gets rough.





◀ In the shop, it's a good idea to stock up on keys. Some levels don't contain enough keys to see you through to the end so it's useful to have a few in reserve. When on level eight or nine, buy Double Shot and Extra Shot Speed – these are the best weapons to use against the menacing master Xybots.

MILLENIUM 2.2

Electric Dreams

The complete players guide to Ian Bird's strategy-adventure bonanza, courtesy of the game's creator.

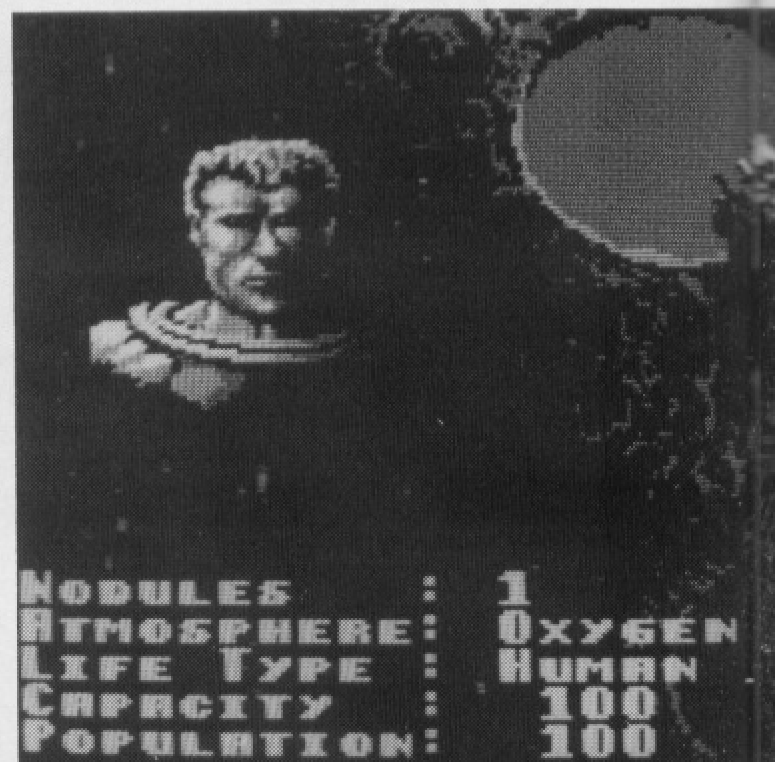
GETTING STARTED

Getting to grips with the seven departments, or 'nodes' of the moonbase should be your top priority from the outset. It's important to remember that the separate departments cannot function independently – they all rely on what's supplied by the moonbase's other facilities.



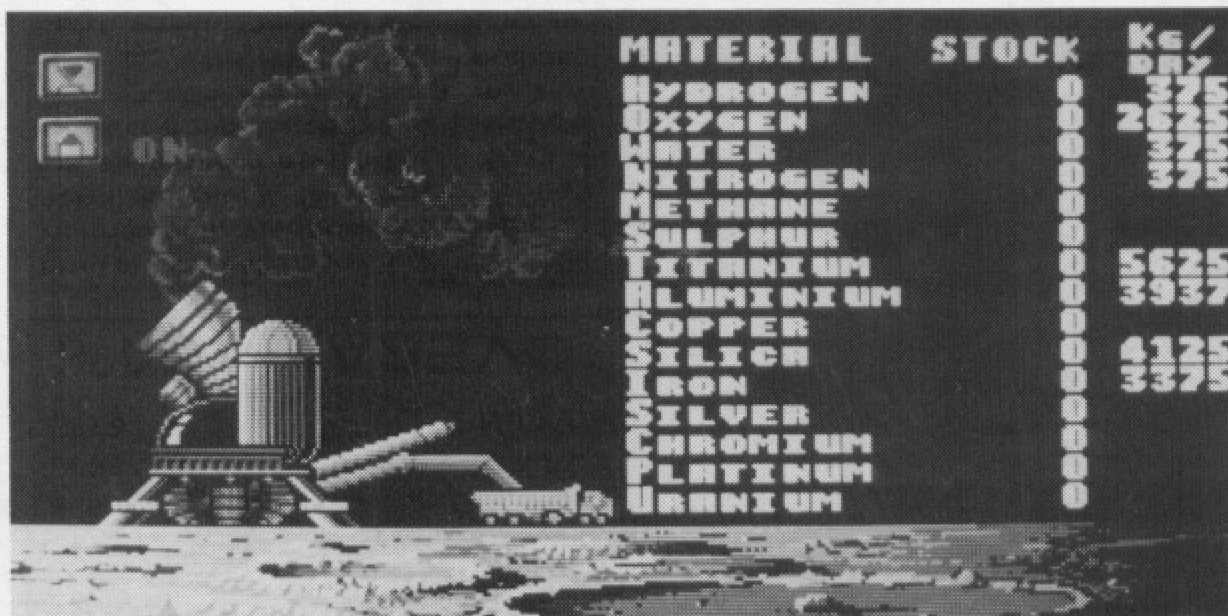
FLIGHT BAYS

The facility to individually name all of your ships is a necessity. Don't give your ships meaningless names – name them logically so you can remember what the ship's purpose is just by glancing at it.



LIFE SUPPORT

The moonbase MUST be manned by at least 50 personnel at all times. Since the bog-standard life support unit can only hold 100 people, the unit must be expanded if you want to man any ships (if crewing a ship will reduce the base's population to less than 50, you will not be allowed to do so – simple as that). On the moon, six modules can be fitted, allowing a populous of 600 people. On alien colonies, however, modules cannot be added. Fortunately, due to the atmosphere on alien worlds, colonists stationed there are likely to mutate and live outside the base on the planet surface – allowing potentially limitless populations!



RESOURCE

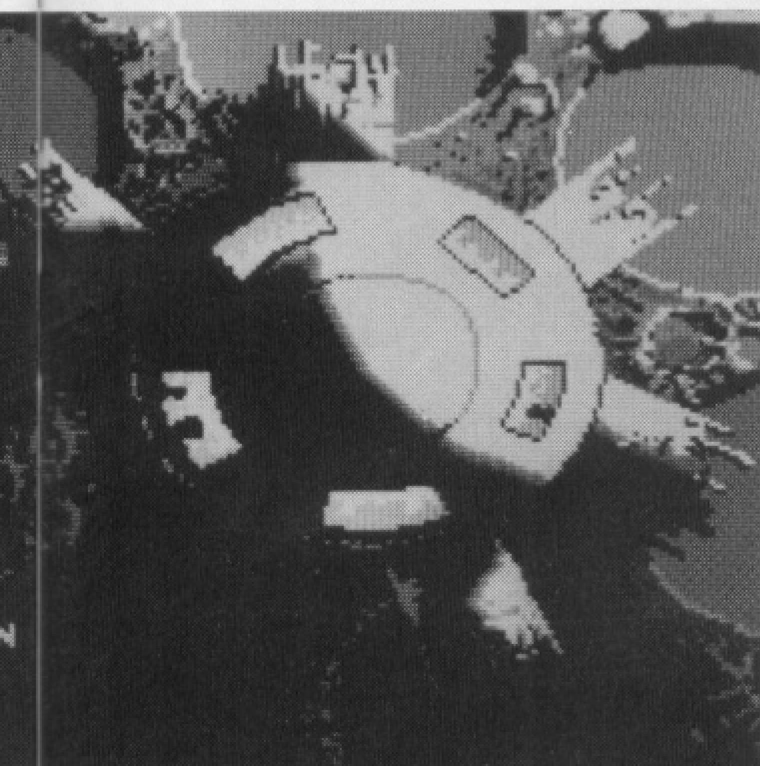
The resource unit – the facility which provides raw materials for use in the production department – requires 50 personnel and 30kwh of power to run efficiently. If either of these factors drop below these levels, the mine will shut down automatically. At the outset, the mine is switched off, and it should be turned on immediately in order to build up a stock of materials. Later on in the game, when there is no need to manufacture any more materials, the mine should be shut down to reduce demand on the power generator.

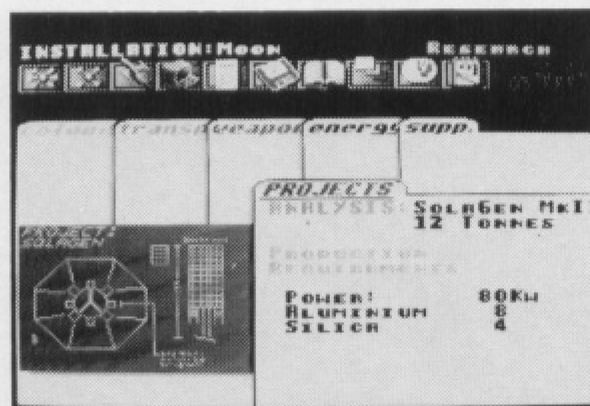
DEFENCE

Orbital lasers are much more efficient than fighters – and you don't have to rely on your arcade skills! Build up a large reserve of these and use fighters only as a last resort. When an alien attack does hit the mark, you're only likely to lose a small number of personnel (which replace themselves automatically) and a solagen, so keep some of these in reserve in the bunker.



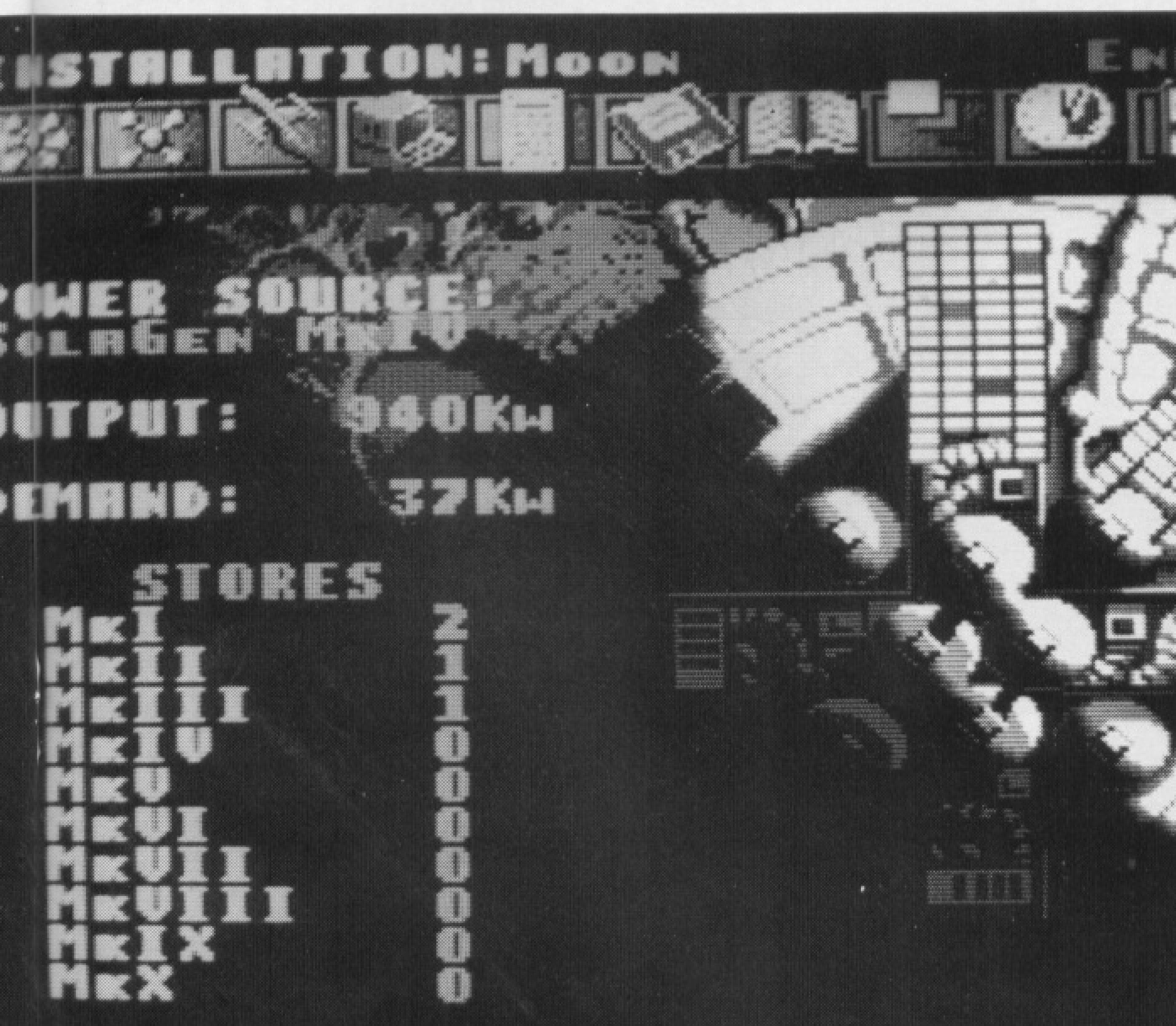
TIPS





RESEARCH

This facility provides information on equipment and planets in the galaxy. Researching a piece of equipment couldn't be easier – just select it and wait – but planets are not so simple. For data to be acquired on these, you must send a probe there to inspect it and wait for it to send back its findings. Depending on the distance to the planet, this can take anything from a few days to over a year.



Each section of the moonbase requires an absolute minimum of 1kwh at all times – thus the energy plant must generate at least 7kwh to keep the moonbase 'alive'. Building ships and equipment, life support and mining materials requires yet more energy. For maximum moonbase efficiency, you should give priority to upgrading the energy plant by adding extra solagens – don't stop until you have a Mk X, the most powerful solagen of all, raking in a massive 35,010kwh.

COLONISATION

Vital. This is the only way you can acquire materials not available on the moon. Don't send colonies out willy nilly – study the probe's analysis of the target planet carefully and make sure it holds the materials you need before sending a Standard Interplanetary Operations Spacecraft (SIOS). Once a colony is established, start up a chain of Carracks to ferry materials and equipment back and forth.

IN GENERAL . . .

- Use the 'advance day' facility whenever possible – it's an absolute necessity when waiting for ships to complete long journeys and so on.
- Base fighters come equipped with a useful facility for use in ship-to-ship combat. If you lose your bearings, hit the right mouse button to instantly return the fighter to its correct X-Y axis.
- Establish as many colonies as you can – in the later stages of the game, some colonies will declare independence and cut off all communication with you. If that colony was providng vital raw materials, it's useful to have another to fall back on.

SHIPS

Apart from the probe, there are three types of ship, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. Here's a rundown . . .

GRAZER Used for mining asteroids – these should be built first as they provide the materials needed to build a SIOS.

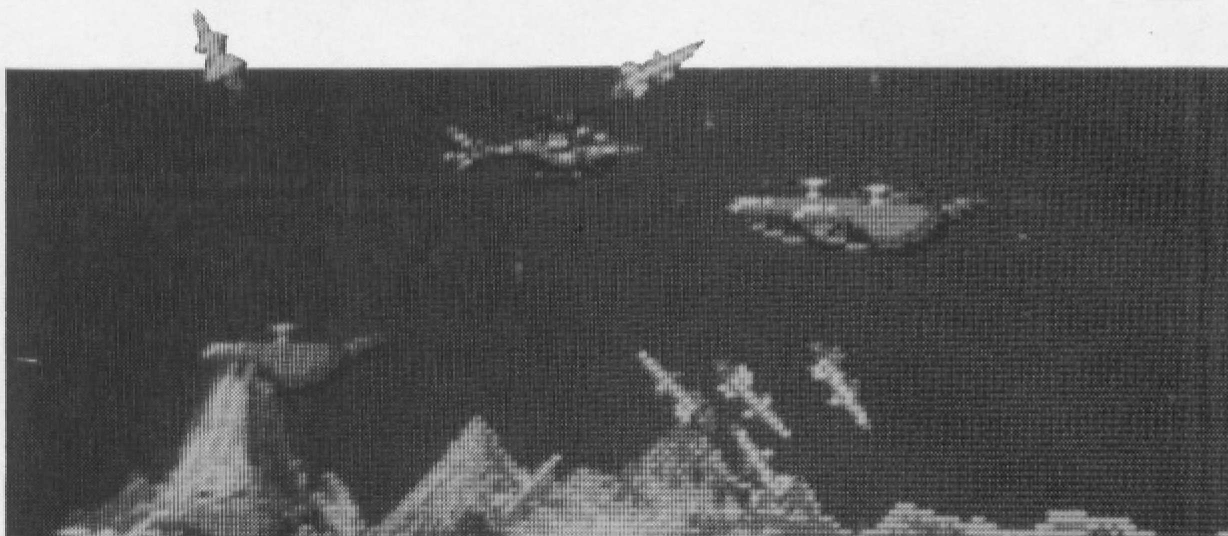
WAVERIDER Use whenever you need speedy cargo transport. It flies at twice the speed of any other ship!

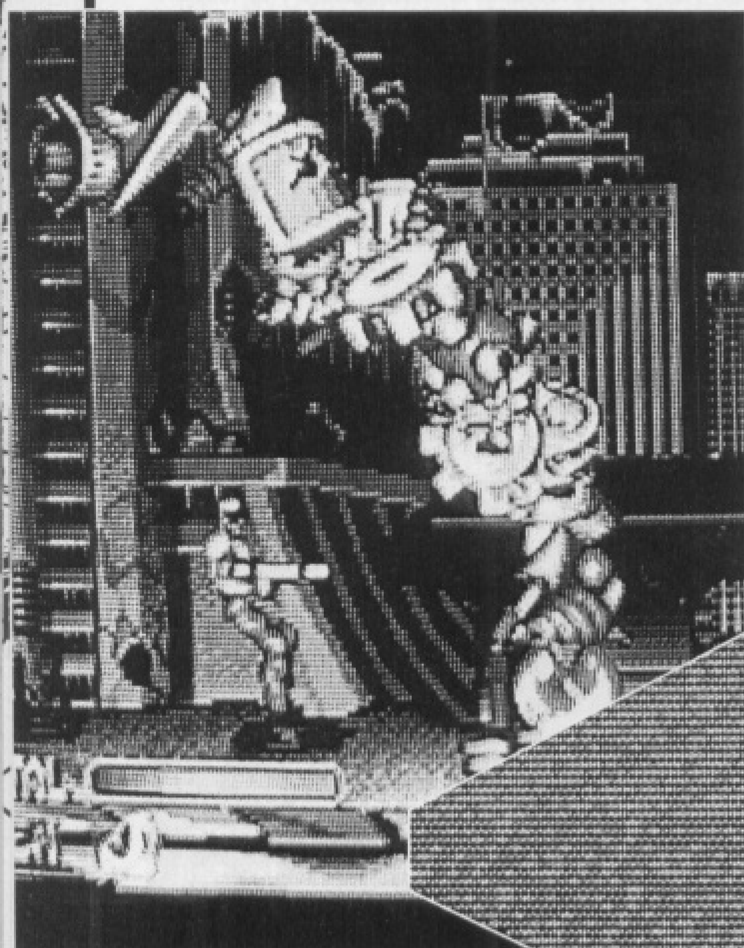
CARRACK The perfect workhorse, the Carrack is best used for carrying large amounts of cargo. Can Carry almost anything.

FORGOTTEN WORLDS

US Gold

On the title screen, type ARC and hit the HELP key to start the game with the cheat mode activated. During play you can now press 'S' to go immediately to the shop or 'L' to skip to the next level. Unfortunately infinite lives or energy don't come as part of the deal. Thanks to Arc Developments for that one.





Virgin SILKWORM

Amiga only. Hold down the HELP key while pressing fire to start play to activate the cheat mode. Now you can jump to any level you please via the number keys on the top row AND you get infinite lives into the bargain.

POPULOUS

Electronic Arts

Some codes to get you off the mark . . .

LVL	WORLD NAME	TERRAIN TYPE
9	BURWILCON	DESERT
12	BILCEMET	SNOW & ICE
17	IMMUSILL	ROCKY
20	SHADTED	SNOW & ICE
23	SADWILLOW	SNOW & ICE
32	SHIDIEHOLE	GRASS
36	JOSTME	GRASS
38	SWAINGPAL	DESERT
44	BILADOR	SNOW & ICE
46	WEAVINPERT	ROCKY
50	HOBOZJOB	GRASS
58	VERYELIN	SNOW & ICE
60	HAMINMAR	ROCKY
64	SHIOZER	ROCKY
72	EOAELING	DESERT

ROBOCOP

Ocean

ST only. Pause the game and type in ALEX MURPHY (including the space) to activate the cheat mode. You can hold down the left-hand mouse button to replenish Robo's energy!

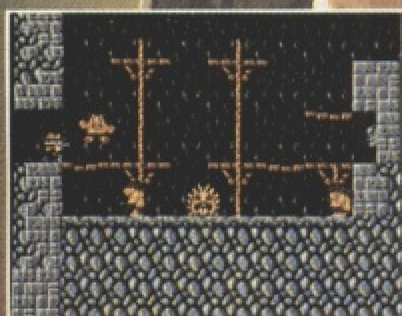
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- High-speed tips for GRAND PRIX CIRCUIT
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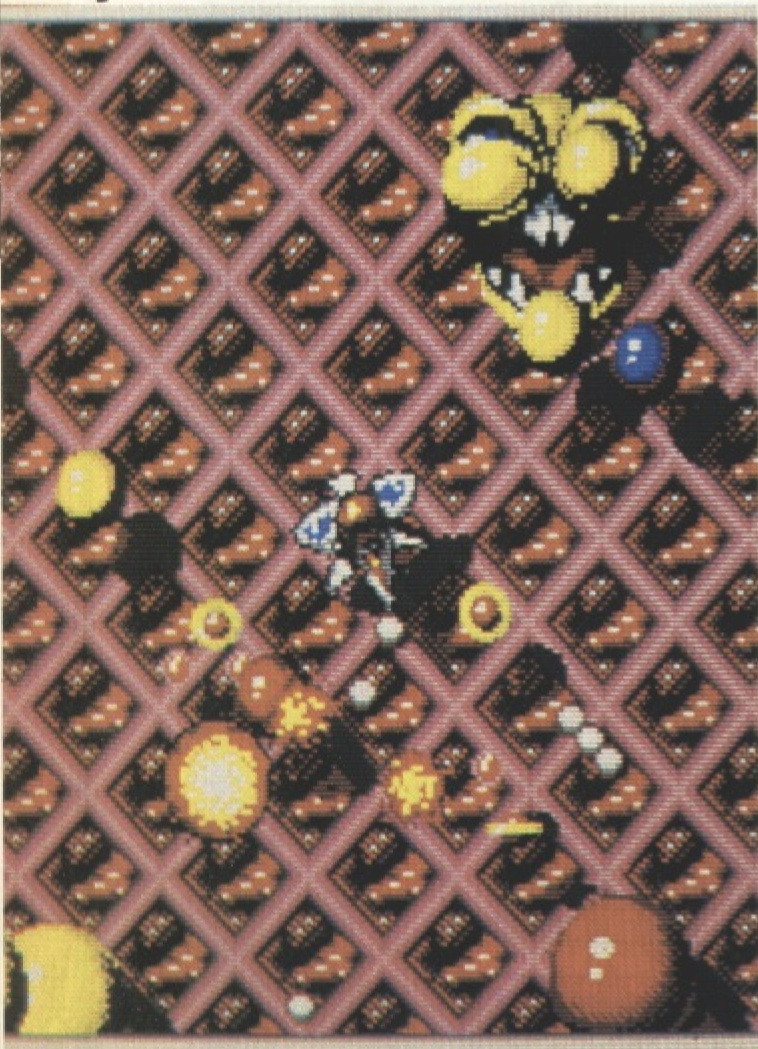


Possibly the most conservative of all the levels, the Organic Zone is a good ol' fashioned Xenon-style blast. As the name suggests, the aliens here are suitably 'living'. Dragonflies attack in swarms and hearts shoot pus-bombs from their pulsating valves, Eeeaargghh!

Paul Shirley's first 16-bit effort for Firebird incorporates just aboue every shoot 'em up concept ever devised – plus a few more besides. Enough to impress just about anybody ... even Brian Nedbitt.



Quartz





The centre of the Quartz Universe is the Lattice, the eight-way scrolling battleground that forms every other level. Here you're attacked, in classic Asteroids style, by rock-like Hadrons. Shooting these breaks them into smaller pieces called Quarks, which in turn become Neutrinos when shot. The colour of the Hadron determines the type of Neutrino – red, yellow or blue – that you'll eventually be rewarded with. When the correct amount of all three neutrino types have been collected (shown by the three bars to the right of the playing area), they can be traded in for one of 12 types of power-up.

Look out!! The mutant Quargs from the planet Zarcon have amassed a battle fleet and now they're out to conquer the Earth!! Actually the scenario for **Quartz**, Paul Shirley's first foray into the 16-bit market reads nothing like that at all.

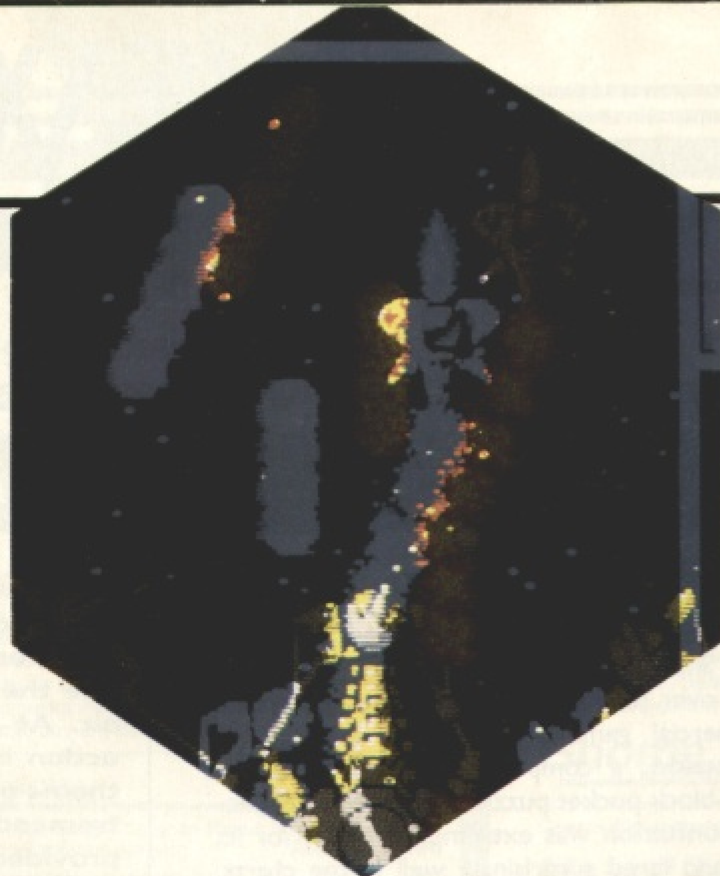
Quartz is a progressive shoot 'em up, and carrying on the tradition of Shirley's earlier efforts **Confuzion** and **Spindizzy**, there's no plot to speak of. Instead the player is dropped right in the thick of things with just one order – kill everything.

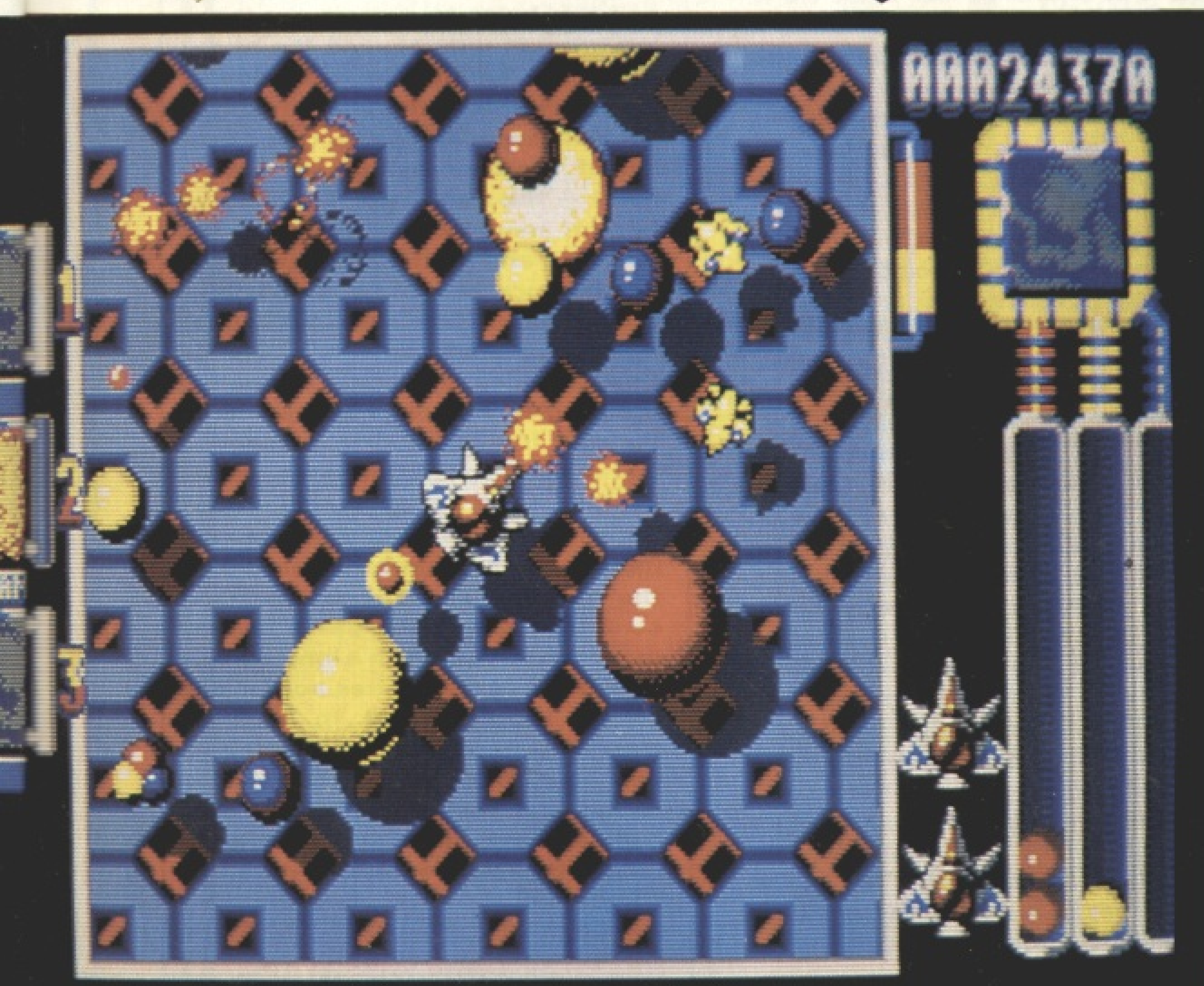
The gameplay draws its inspiration from just about every shoot 'em up game you can name – **Asteroids, Space Invaders, Galaxians** and – more recently – **Parallax, Xenon, Nemesis** and **R-Type** among others, upgrading and tweaking the elements 'borrowed' from each and bundling them together in one package.

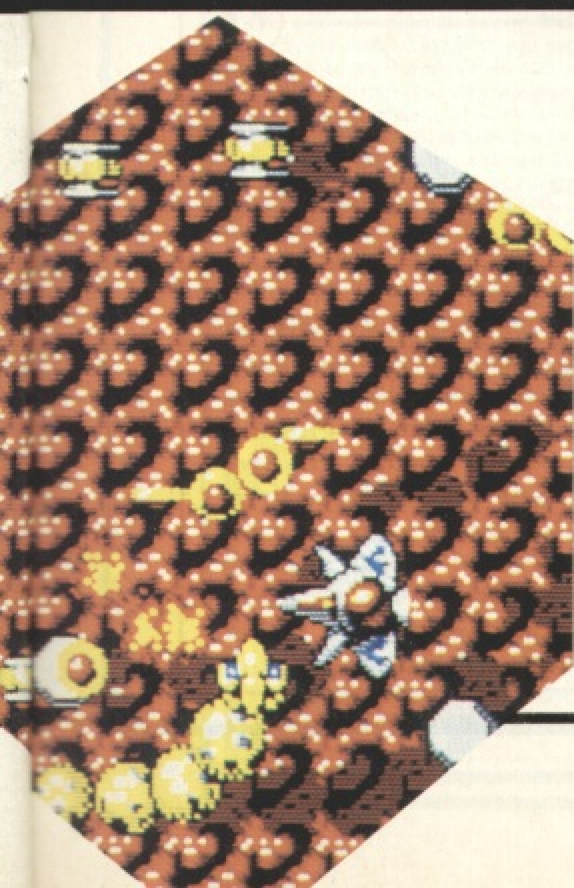


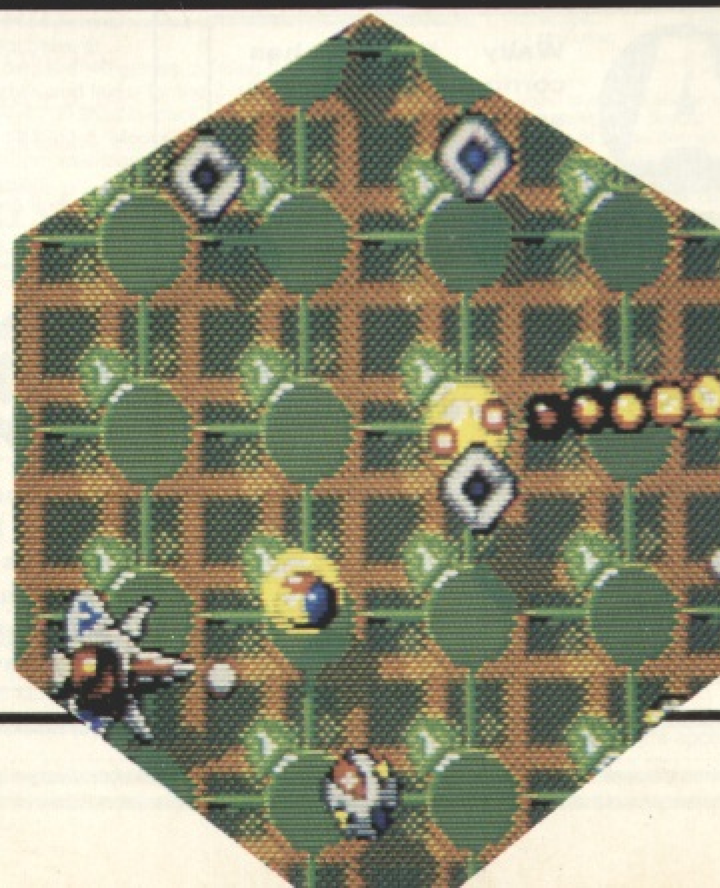
In the Atomic Zone there's more shoot 'em up action, this time scrolling from left to right. The aliens' main defence here are rotating fire pendulums that require some nifty flying to avoid, and at the end of the level a huge atomic nucleus awaits...



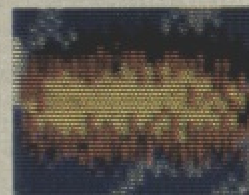




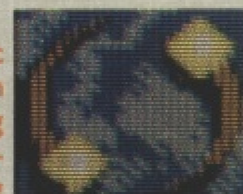




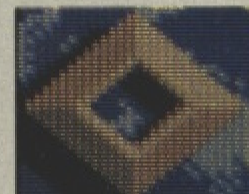
Ten different power-ups can be collected, but not all can be active at a time. The Quartz fighter is equipped with three slots (upgradable to six) each of which can hold an extra weapon (these are activated by the function keys). A nice touch is that on your last life you can scrap any weapons you may have in order to recoup some much-needed energy.



FLAME Scorches a hole in anything that gets in its way.



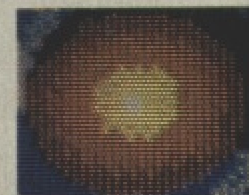
EXTRA The classic power-up. Most useful on the vertically-scrolling levels, these act like Multiples, effectively doubling the ship's firepower.



ARMOUR Reduces the amount of damage sustained by laser fire or collisions.



OCTOGUN Eight-way firepower. Excellent for use on the Lattice levels, where you're attacked from all angles.

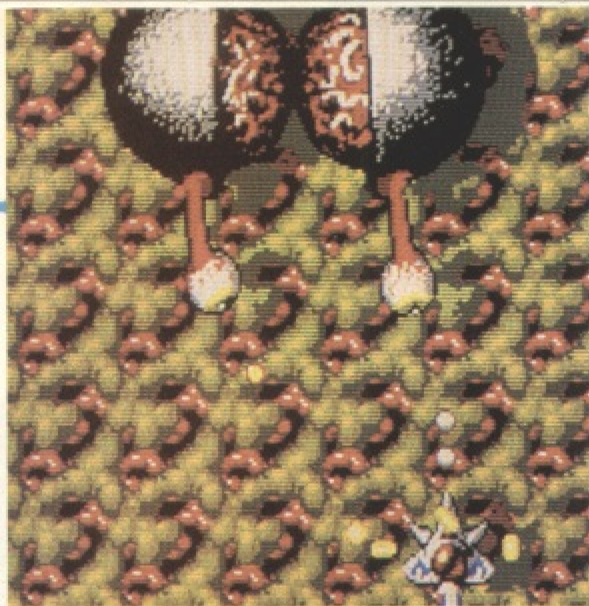


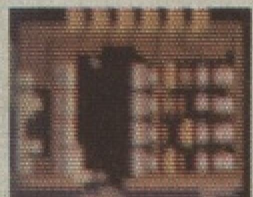
BOMB Three smart bombs.



POD Equips the ship with an extra slot, so more weapons can be installed.

◄ **The Lair is effectively the Atomic Zone in reverse, with the Quartz fighter battling from right to left through the alien onslaught. Electrical Storms that could fry you in a second are commonplace here, as is metallic crushing machinery that threatens to...well, crush you.**

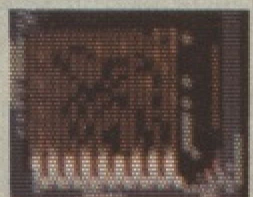




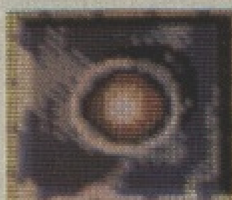
AMPLIFY While in normal mode, buying a power-up takes away all your neutrinos, with Amplify fitted, you can keep half of them.



REPAIR Tops up the ship's energy level.

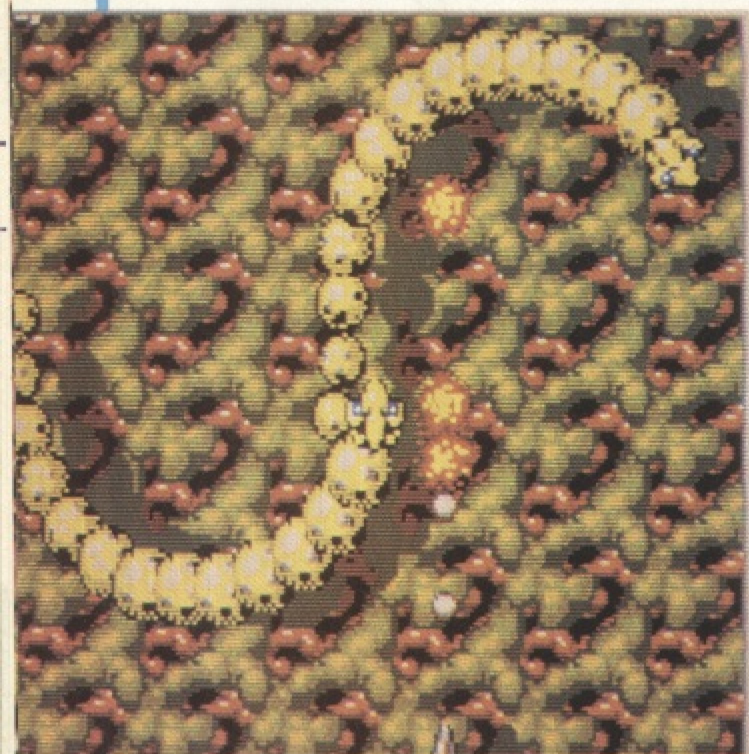


RECORD A kind of ramsave facility. When this is installed, your position is saved in memory so you can return there on your next game.



GRENADE Well what do you think it does?

If you manage to survive the designated time in the lattice, it's off to one of Quartz's shoot 'em up subgames – The Void, The Atomic Zone, The Lair and The Organic Zone. Each of these is protected by a mother alien found at the end, and once this is destroyed it's back to the next Lattice to carry on the quest.



...AND DON'T CALL ME SHIRLEY

Twenty-six year-old Leicester lad Paul Shirley's programming career began just over four years when he wrote his first commercial game for Incentive Software – **Confuzion,** a computer version of the old slidey-block pocket puzzles. Despite its simplicity, **Confuzion** was extremely playable for its time and fared surprisingly well in the charts. Around a year later came his biggest success to date, Electric Dreams' **Spindizzy,** an isometric arcade-puzzle extravaganza. It's been described as the thinking man's **Marble Madness,** but was Atari's classic a source of inspiration for Paul? "Not really. I just happened to be messing around with an isometric graphics routine and the game grew out of that." Then came **Mission Genocide,** a so-so 8-bit budget game and then **Quartz,** his first 16-bit project, which he's not ashamed to admit was inspired by **Asteroids. "Wibble Wobble** (as **Quartz** was orignally called) was initially just the basic Lattice game, and I added the other levels as I went along." Surprisingly, Paul's not much of a games player himself, and his tastes are very discerning. "The only games I've really enjoyed recently are **Tetris** and **Defender Of The Crown.** My all-time favourite game is Atari's **I, Robot.** I've got the original arcade machine at home and I'd love to convert it to home computers but not even the Amiga or Archimedes could handle the filled 3D graphics. The coin-op itself has a hard enough time of it and that's got a 20Mb maths processor! Perhaps when a more powerful machine comes along..." So while Paul is waiting for the machine of his dreams to arrive, what's he working on? "I'm currently writing **Spindizzy II** for the ST and Amiga. It'll be an expanded and improved version of the 8-bit original. When will it be finished? Wait and see..."



Wally Beben has composed a different soundtrack for this version, and although it's more 'meaty', it doesn't have the same foot-tapping quality as its ST counterpart. Otherwise things remain exactly the same.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Late August
GRAPHICS	91%
SOUND	80%
PLAYABILITY	81%
VALUE	80%

OVERALL 85%



Shoot 'em ups these days are two-a-penny. Original shoot 'em ups are a lot harder to come by, and GOOD original shoot 'em ups are even rarer, which is why Quartz is like the proverbial breth of fresh air. At last a blaster where the action isn't restricted to just one theme or gameplay style. There's a tremendous amount of variety provided by the different sections and this helps to sustain the lasting interest way beyond the average shoot 'em up. The most clever thing about it is the way in which the five 'separate' game types are linked together by one core element – the neutrinos. The collection of neutrinos is essential to survival, and a little game in itself – a balance has to be struck between the three colours in order to qualify for an extra weapon, and this provides a tactical element. It's tough – but don't let that put you off. It's well worth persevering, even if the action does seem initially too hot to handle. Bob Stevenson's exquisite graphics enhance the package considerably – the parallax scrolling that's present throughout the game is the most effective seen in a long while, and many of the sprites border on coin-op quality. Add to that a thumping good Wally 'Hagar' Beben soundtrack to get the pulse racing and you've got one of the best looking, best sounding and most playable blasters to date.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Late August
GRAPHICS	90%
SOUND	80%
PLAYABILITY	81%
VALUE	80%

OVERALL 85%



There are no plans as yet for a IBM-compatible version, and even if Firebird does decide to produce one, Paul Shirley won't be writing it. He prefers to concentrate his efforts on the ST and the Amiga so the work would most likely be carried out by a third-party development house.

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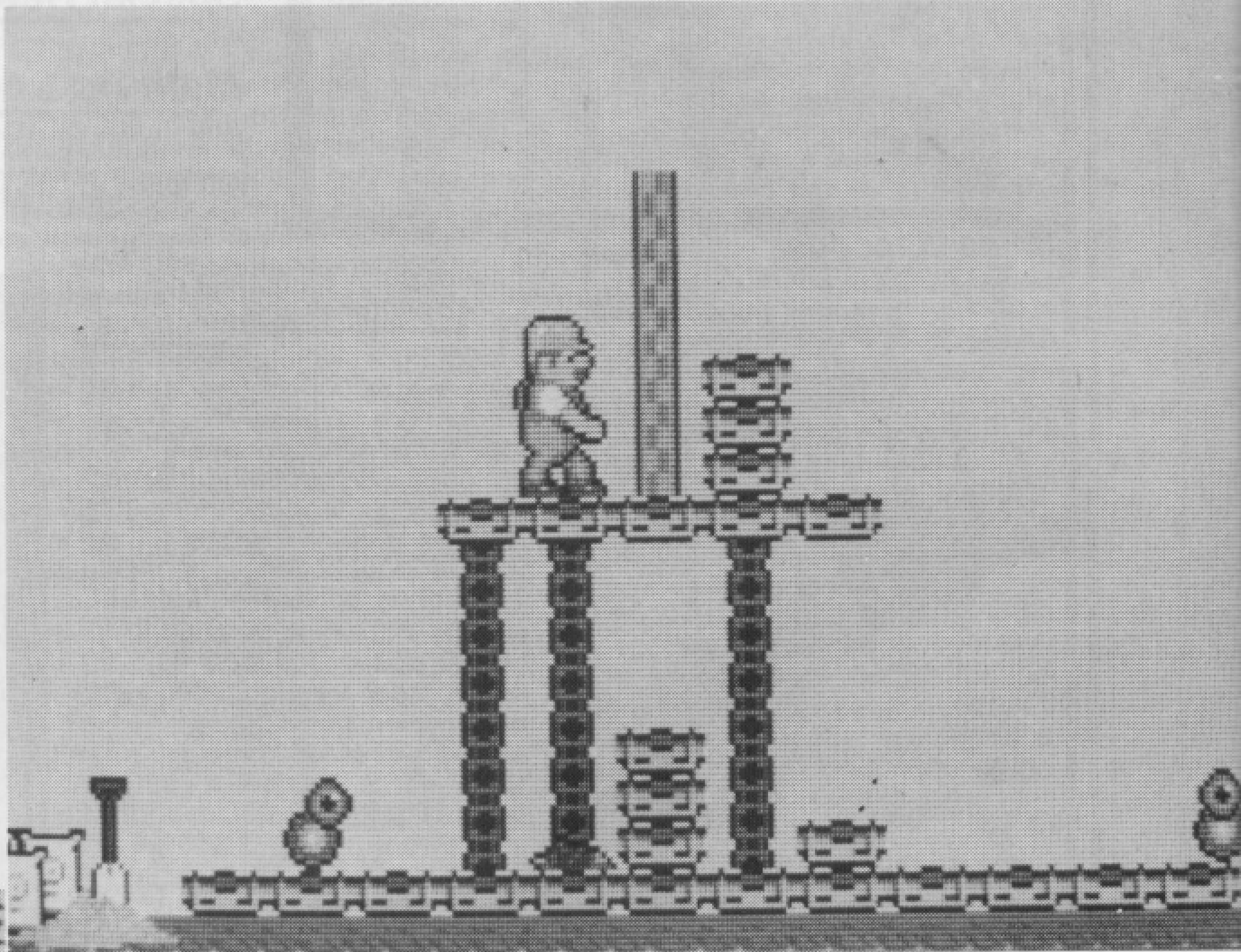
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High Steel

Screen 7 takes to the world of skyscraper building in a cartoon caper that owes more to Nintendo's Mario and Luigi games than any real-life Bovis site. Ciarán Brennan gives some constructive criticism.

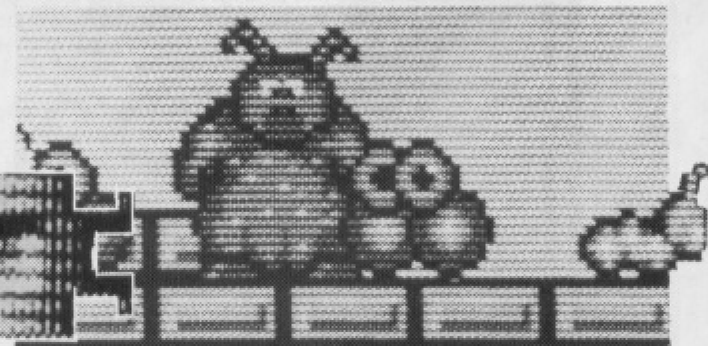
Problems, problems ... it's easy enough to carry floor panels from level to level, but girders are just a little too unwieldly. The only way to go up in the world is to construct a finished floor and wait for the crane to lower the next girder onto it. By the way, the crane will only deliver a new girder if all the existing ones are firmly fixed in position.



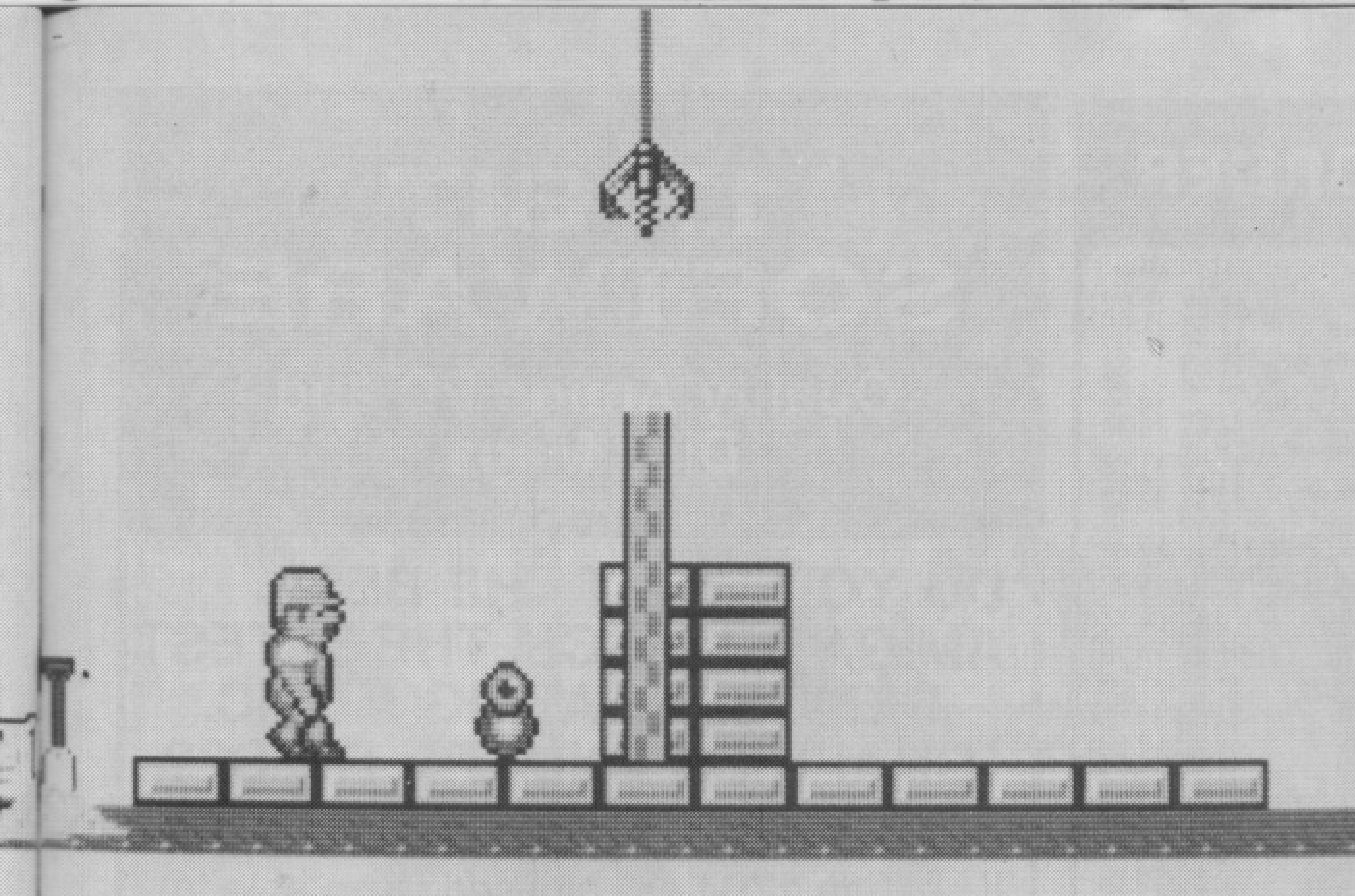
Cast your mind back to a time when coin-ops either featured shapeless spaceships or cute rotund moustachioed characters overcoming puzzle style obstacles in an attempt to catch a gorilla or some other beastie ...

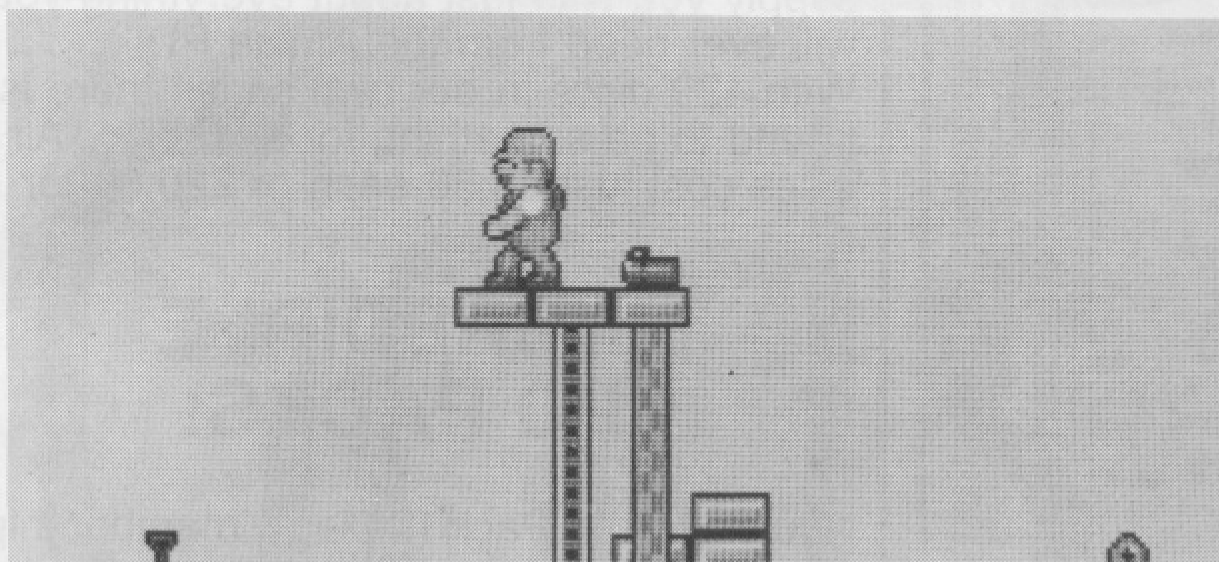
On second thoughts, why bother? There's no need to search your memory banks, as Screen 7 has revived the concept (to some degree at least) in this, a tale of a cute moustachioed builder struggling against a bevvy of cute enemies in an attempt to finish his contract on time.

All the materials needed for the job are lowered onto the site from a tall crane — the rest is up to you ...



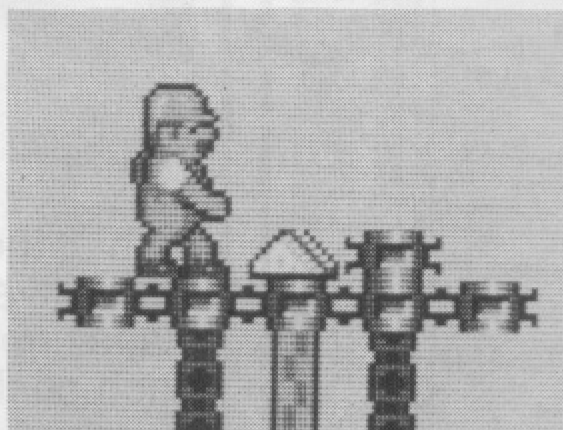
As if building work wasn't hectic enough, this particular site is infested with a motley crew of creepy crawlies. Most of these are fatal to the touch – most, that is, but not the gremlins (the strange round things on the floor), which get in the way a lot and occasionally eat through your finished work.

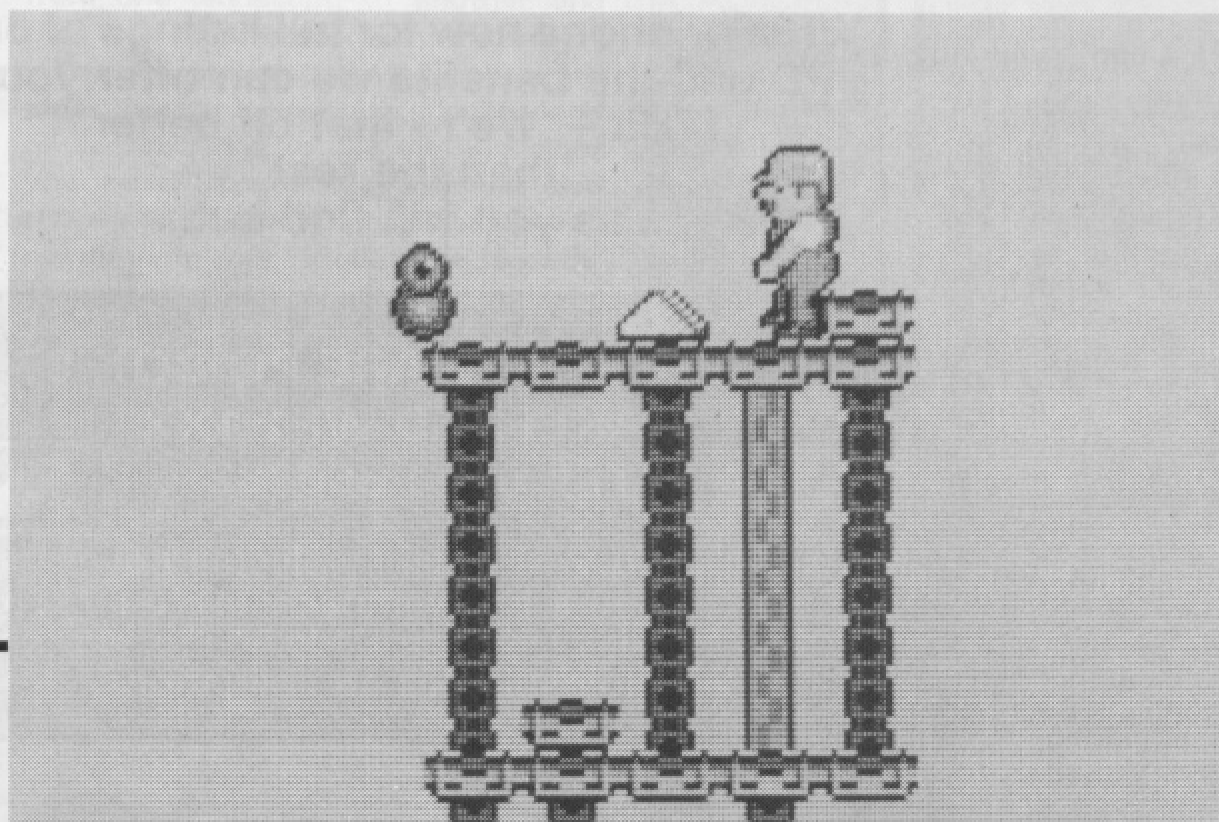




Girders are 'fixed' by placing them squarely in the centre of a floor panel. When it's in position, a girder can be climbed and will support one floor panel on top and one on either side. Therefore, it shouldn't take a genius to work out that it takes at least two fixed girders to support a complete floor.

Two elements work against you – fading energy and a fast approaching deadline. Nothing can be done about the time element, but sandwiches and flasks serve to top up the tiring navvy's energy bar.





A

There's nothing like a combination between good old fashioned arcade romping and some classy 16-bit presentation – and as the old joke goes, this IS nothing like . . . That's not to say that it's a complete disaster or anything like that. After all, the most important aspect – the gameplay – is commendable enough, for the most part successfully treading the fine line between addictive joystick manoeuvring and low-key brain teasing. And it's not as if the game looks too bad either – in fact, if it wasn't for the completely blank backgrounds it would be almost perfect in this department. The sound department is pretty well equipped too – the effects are cute, suitable and they add an extra element to the gameplay (even if they do sometimes crop up slightly out of synch with the action like a badly dubbed foreign movie). So what's the problem then? Well, it's that age-old 'lack of depth' situation. After you've made it off the ground a couple of times it suddenly dawns on you that that's it – there's a fairly simple technique to be mastered, and after that . . . nothing. If there was a prize given for the game with the most unfulfilled pontential, High Steel would be a runaway winner – but there isn't . . . so this is one arcade outing that remains a good idea, but ultimately misses the mark.

PRICE	£19.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	72%
SOUND	76%
PLAYABILITY	80%
VALUE	62%

OVERALL 64%

ST

Expect this a little later than the Amiga version, but at a similar price. No real differences are expected, but it is likely that the cutesy sound effects may lose some of their sparkle.

As with the greatest of arcade games, the concept is simple. Level by level, you construct a progressively higher building: one storey for the first level, two for the second and so on. Finished floors measure at least five floor panels wide.

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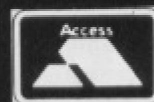
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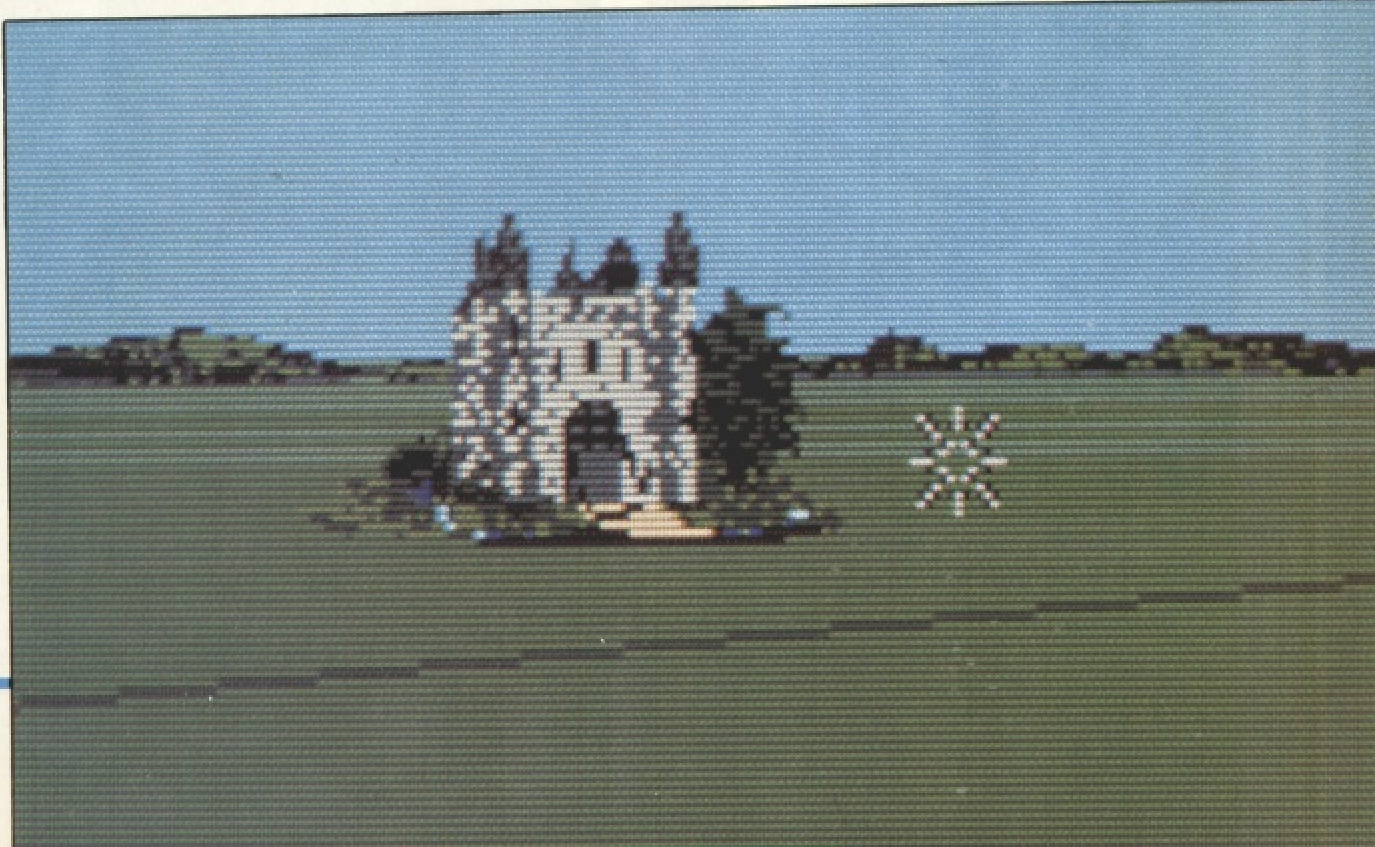
Sleeping Gods Lie

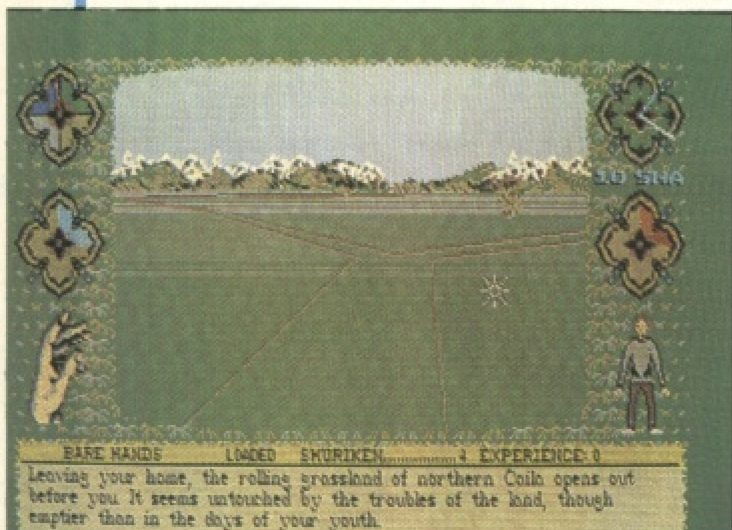
Empire's first offering promises 'a unique world of sight and sound' in glorious 3D – but it takes a little more than copious landscapes to impress Steve Cooke . . .

Loosely categorisable as a 3D arcade adventure, SGL places you in a world comprising eight separate 'kingdoms', each one effectively a separate level with different puzzles. Within each kingdom are six or more 'landscapes', with most of the gameplay involving finding out how to move from one landscape to another and then from that kingdom to the next.

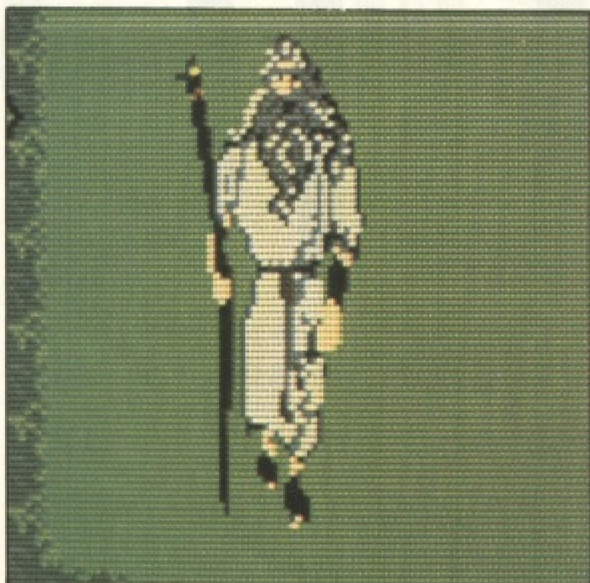
The scenario isn't devastatingly original. Everything is going sour the land of Tessera, and to put matters right you must locate the sleeping god N'Ghir. To do this you must battle and puzzle your way through the landscapes, keeping your energy high and selecting appropriate weapons for each opponent.

Sleeping Gods Lie cleverly combines traditional bit-mapped graphics with 3D filled geometric shapes. Here's a view of your home from outside. Looks pretty, doesn't it?





The world is presented in a large window as a scrolling 3D landscape – something of a blend between Driller and Lords Of Midnight. The icons around the edge of the screen tell you which direction you're heading in, what the time is, how strong you are, and how magical you're feeling. There are also two pictograms, showing the weapon you're grasping (in this case you're armed only with your bare hands) and your state of dress – useful for checking your armour status. Note that the icons all look rather similar, a somewhat strange design choice, methinks.



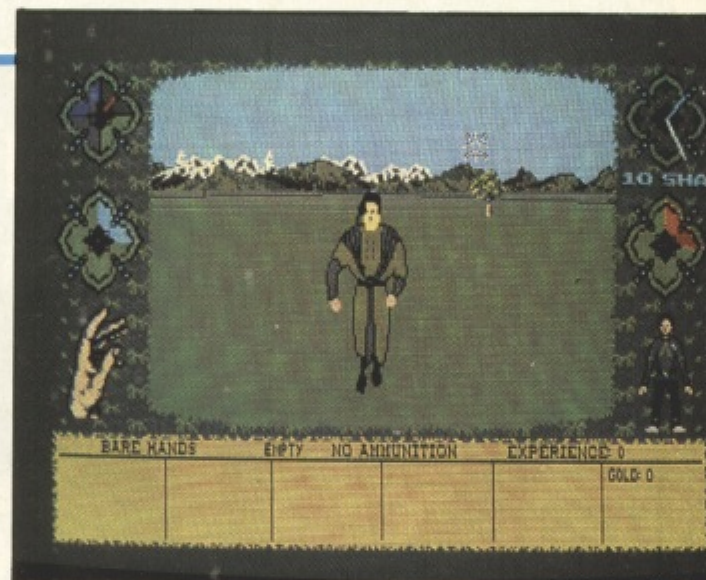
Not everyone you meet is hostile. Some characters indulge in a little one-way conversation. This may be useful for getting information for solving puzzles, but it's a pity that there's no scope for more complex interaction. The narrative window at the bottom of the screen keeps you updated on the action and helps build up the atmosphere.

When you get inside, however, things aren't quite so rosy. Graphics are sparse and traditionally angular, although screen updating is very swift. That little thing on the ground is an object. Unfortunately you can't find out what it is until you pick it up. this can be annoying because sometimes you may need to make a quick decision whether to blag a nearby item or run from a nearby nasty – and the decision isn't always easy to make when you're not sure what the item is! Objects are picked up by moving over them.

ST Software houses are having a lot of challenges thrown at them these days, what with more powerful micros to write for and continuing developments in programming technology. It's understandable that a company like ODE should want to put as much technical innovation into the game as possible, but SGL joins the growing list of games which, unfortunately, are over-coded and under-designed. Here this weakness shows up in the lack of interaction with the world you find yourself in, forcing SGL to sit unhappily between the arcade and adventure categories. It's a very competent piece of programming, but those who thrive on puzzles will find it limiting and those who thrive on action will find it equally lacking. If, on the other hand, you're of the broad-minded category of gamesplayer and enjoy exploration with a bit of action on the way, then SGL offers a pretty enormous challenge. There are 94 landscapes to get through – and that's going to take a long, long time.

PRICE	£24.95
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	79%
SOUND	65%
PLAYABILITY	75%
VALUE	80%

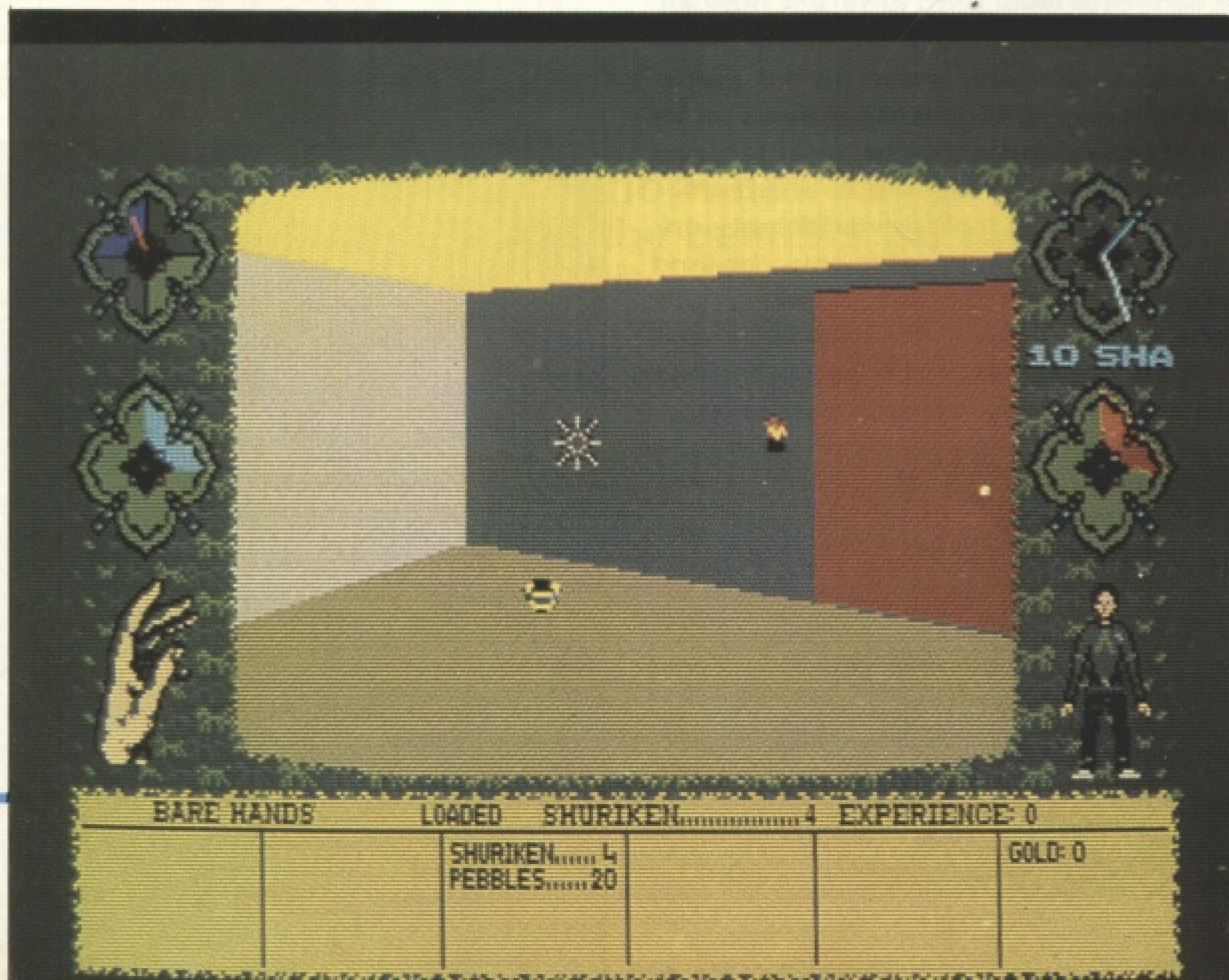
OVERALL 76%



This bloke doesn't like the cut of your jib. He's only throwing stones, but they reduce your stamina significantly unless you either fight back or move away. Combat is accomplished by first selecting a weapon from your inventory (many require that you also have some ammunition, which is left behind by defeated enemies). A cursor-sight also acts as a direction indicator for movement if you wish. Hostile characters sometimes cause serious aggravation in later stages, providing an unwelcome distraction from puzzle solving so you have to divide your time uneasily between the two activities. This combination doesn't, unfortunately, offer the best of either game-style.

A A two-disk affair as opposed to the ST's three, the only real difference here will be enhanced stereo sound effects to aid the detection of enemies by giving a better indication of their direction.

PC Still under development, the Sleeping IBM God should be available by early September – however, early indications suggest that it should be very close to the ST version with the exception of weaker sound.




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Leave behind your Mini Metro and enter a world of drivers with unpronounceable names and long-legged girls wearing sunglasses on top of their heads. Accolade is set to take the world Formula 1 racing by storm and Ciarán Brennan's going along for the ride.

Grand Pri

Dinstinctive Software Inc seems to revel in producing simulations of 'flash' motors. First there was Test Drive (featuring Ferraris, Porsches, Corvettes and the like), then its sequel The Duel, and now, the flashest of the lot, a simulation of a complete Formula One season.

But where the other programs were seemingly pointless trips in the country, this time there's method in the madness. There are three distinctly different cars to master, eight courses to learn and five skill levels – each with its own championship to be decided.

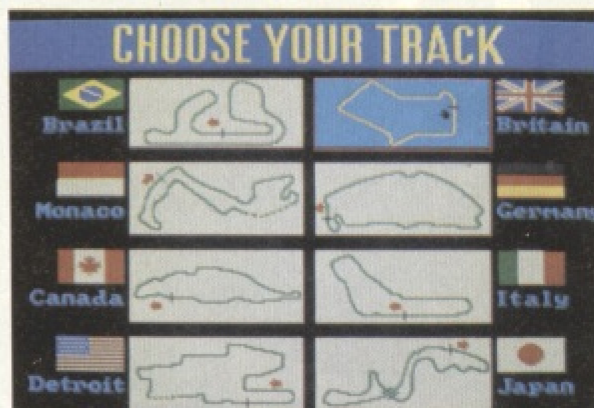
The five levels go from rookie (where it's impossible to spin off, the car can't be damaged and the gears change automatically) through to professional, with the opposition improving accordingly.

Points are awarded in a similar fashion to the real thing: nine for a win, seven for second place and so on. The season lasts for eight weeks and can be saved at any point (there's room on the disk for up to nine saved positions).



Your performance in the qualifying lap determines your eventual position on the starting grid. Obviously, a place in the top row is the one to aim for, but, failing this, a deft starting manoeuvre can usually bring you into contention before the first corner.

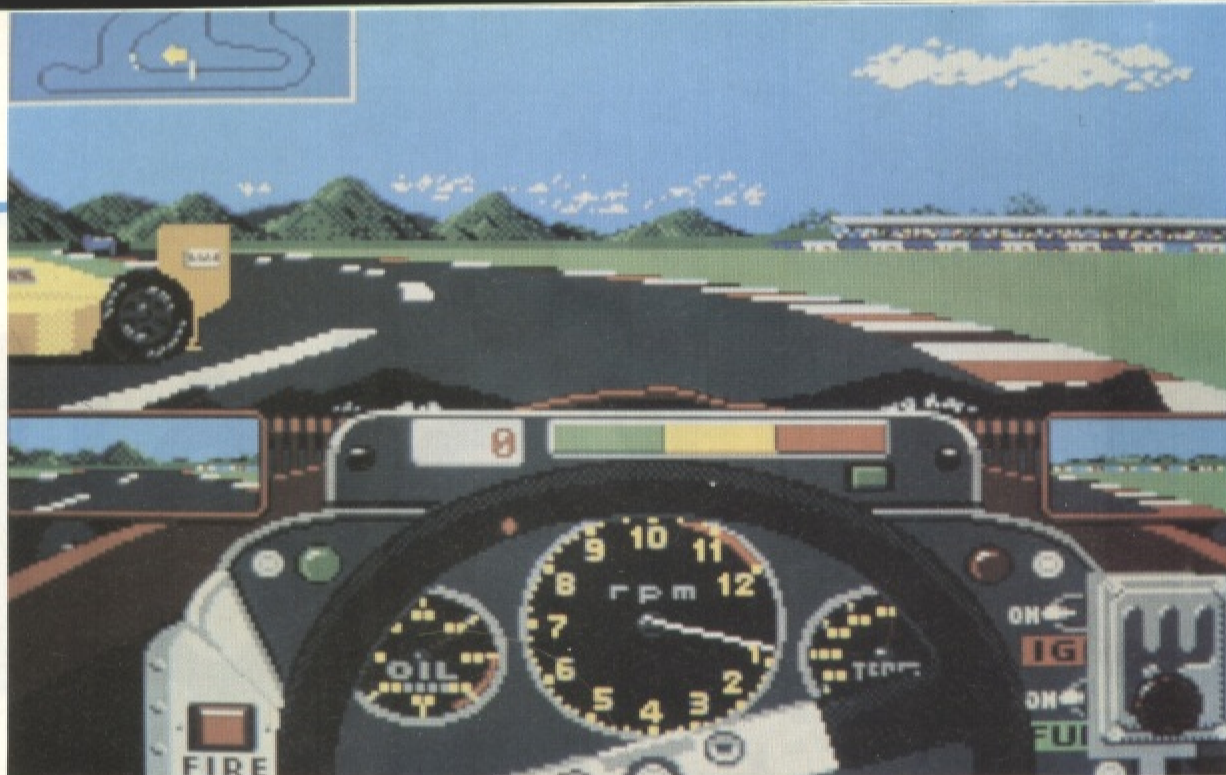
Stride through the pit to choose between a Ferrari, Williams or Maclaren – each decked out in accurate racing colours (albeit with Accolade's associate companies replacing the real sponsors). The Ferrari handles well (but loses speed on the straights), the Williams is a good all-rounder and, true to life, the Maclaren is an unbeatable beast – but only in experienced hands.



There are eight (count 'em) unfeasibly realistic courses to speed around – either in single race mode, all wrapped up together as a championship, or one at a time for practice purposes.





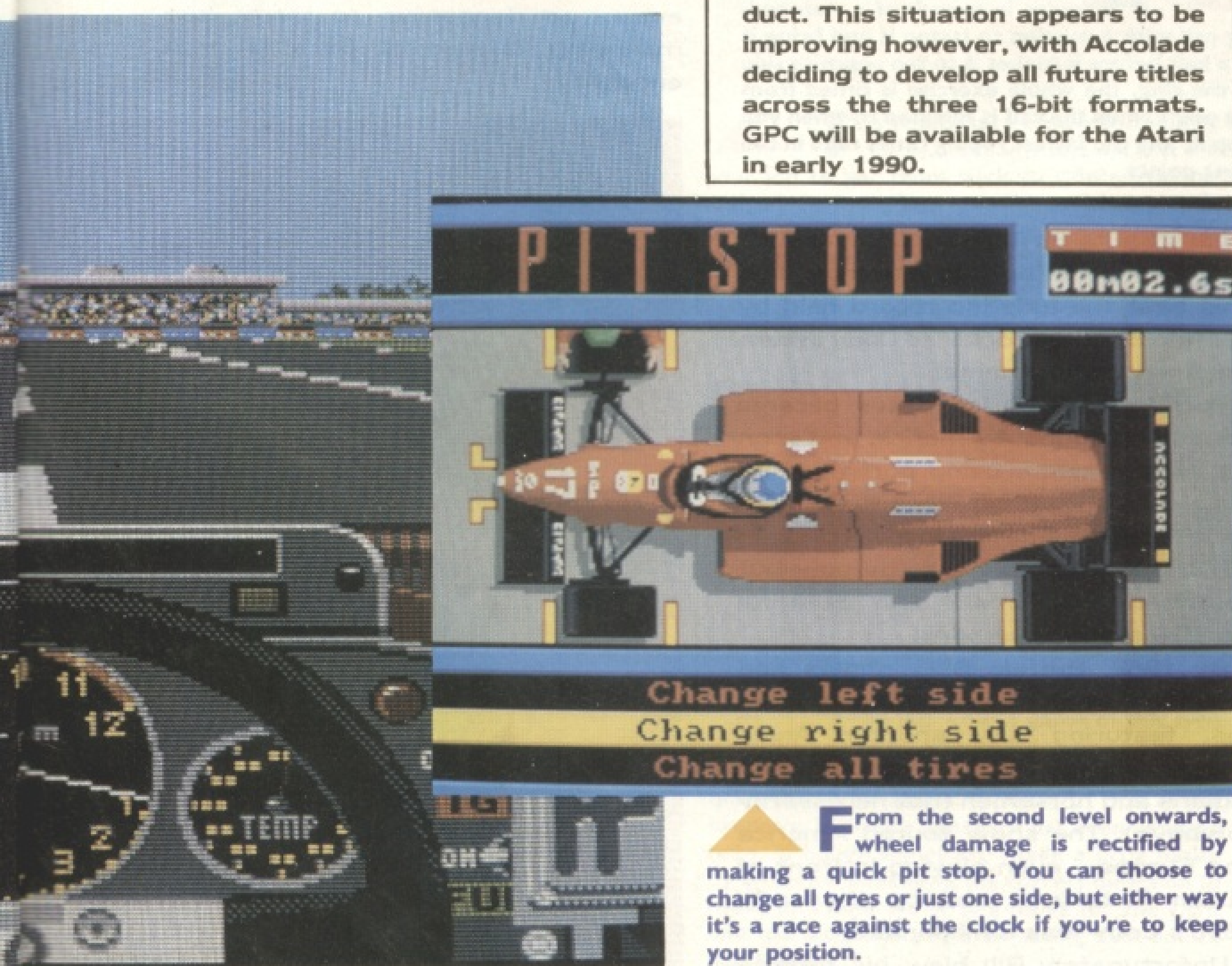


Life's a bitch . . . a little over-enthusiasm on the first bend has left you (and a pretty irate competitor) sitting this one out.

ix Circuit

There's nothing innovative or inspirational about the viewpoint – the cockpit is equipped only with a working rev counter, gear indicator, digitial speed indicator and a black panel above the steering wheel which fills to indicate damage.

ST The Atari machine's poor sales in North America has meant that, up until now, ST owners have been deprived of the cream of US product. This situation appears to be improving however, with Accolade deciding to develop all future titles across the three 16-bit formats. GPC will be available for the Atari in early 1990.



From the second level onwards, wheel damage is rectified by making a quick pit stop. You can choose to change all tyres or just one side, but either way it's a race against the clock if you're to keep your position.

A Most previous attempts are recreating high-speed motor racing on computer have failed for one reason or another: some have been oppressively technical, while others have spoiled any impression of realism by sending a blocky motor around a jerky course. Grand Prix Circuit however has got it just right. There's only one choice really – which car to compete in – and once that's out of the way it's straight into the cockpit of a realistically moving vehicle racing along mostly accurate tracks. I say mostly because some (Monaco, for example) could have benefited from having a few hills and bumps to go along with the perfect straights and corners. There are other elements notable by their absence – weather conditions for one – and the opposition's cars could have done with a little animation to complement their excellent look. But if it's a dose of good, no-nonsense racing action you're after, Grand Prix Circuit is the first to offer excitement, realism and progressive competition all rolled up into one.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	81%
SOUND	79%
PLAYABILITY	84%
VALUE	80%
OVERALL	**83%**

PC Like most US software, GPC was originally developed for the IBM-compatibles and has been available on this format for quite some time. The usual comparative conditions apply – the look and feel are more or less identical, but the beeps are a touch below realistic.

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	69%
SOUND	67%
PLAYABILITY	84%
VALUE	80%
OVERALL	**83%**



Stay out of the black and into the red. Nothing in this game for two in a bed... Knife Throwing is the black sheep of the game, as it's more of a circus attraction than a rodeo event. Your hapless assistant is strapped to a rotating target, and points are scored by hitting it – but not her. To add an extra element of danger, the point bonus increases as knives land closer to the assistant.



Buffalo Bi[ll]

Wild West Rodeo Ga[mes]

Brian Nesbitt gets off his horse and drinks his milk to prepare for a spot of wild west action courtesy of Tynesoft.

William Frederick Cody was born in Iowa in 1846, but moved to Kansas at the age of four. Because of his family's severe poverty, he went to work at an early age, becoming a Pony Express rider at the age of 14. During his three year career as a cowboy postman he broke company speed records and also met with Wild Bill Hickock, who became a life-long friend.

In 1863 he joined the Union Army, serving out the tail-end of the civil war as a despatch rider and hospital orderly. Following stints as a stagecoach driver and an unsuccessful attempt at running a boarding house, he returned to the west as a scout for General Custer.

Cody make his name however, when, working for the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fé Railway Company, he shot a record 69 buffalo in a single day. This beat the existing record held by 'Buffalo Bill' Constock – so Cody in turn assumed the nickname.

Possibly the toughest event, with a crazy steer let loose in the ring – and you following soon after. Chase the steer on horseback and when you're close enough, leap onto its back. Once you're there you've got to bring it to the floor by grabbing its horns and forcing it down. Again the event goes on under the eye of the clock, with the fastest times winning the highest bonuses.





At last, a genuine rodeo event! You're in pursuit of a stampeding calf with a mission to lassoo it and bring it to a halt before it makes it to the opposite side of the ring. the whole exercise is timed from the point when the calf is released to when you stop it, and the fastest roping times rake in the most points.

Buffalo Bill's daring deeds became famous throughout America, and soon his exploits were being portrayed on the New York stage. When Cody played himself in one of these 'epics' in 1872, the critics panned the play but described Cody himself as a 'beautiful blond' – a star was born!

By 1882, Buffalo Bill's shows had grown into major outdoor extravaganzas, featuring sharpshooter Annie Oakley and a cast of genuine Red Indians and horsemen (not necessarily cowboys). The show toured America and Europe – even playing in front of Queen Victoria – and by the early 1890's Cody was a millionaire.

Unfortunately Bill blew his fortune and at the time of his death in 1917 he was still performing in US circuses even though he was so plagued with rhuematism that he could hardly stay in the saddle.

Tynesoft's interpretation of the great man, however, doesn't cover all these aspects of his career, preferring to centre just on his wild west show. There are six events to participate in, some of them basic rodeo events and others proper wild west adventures.

Up to four players can compete in a style similar to the classic Epyx games series, but there's nothing so illustrious as a medal for the winners. With events as dangerous as these, just managing to survive them is prize enough...

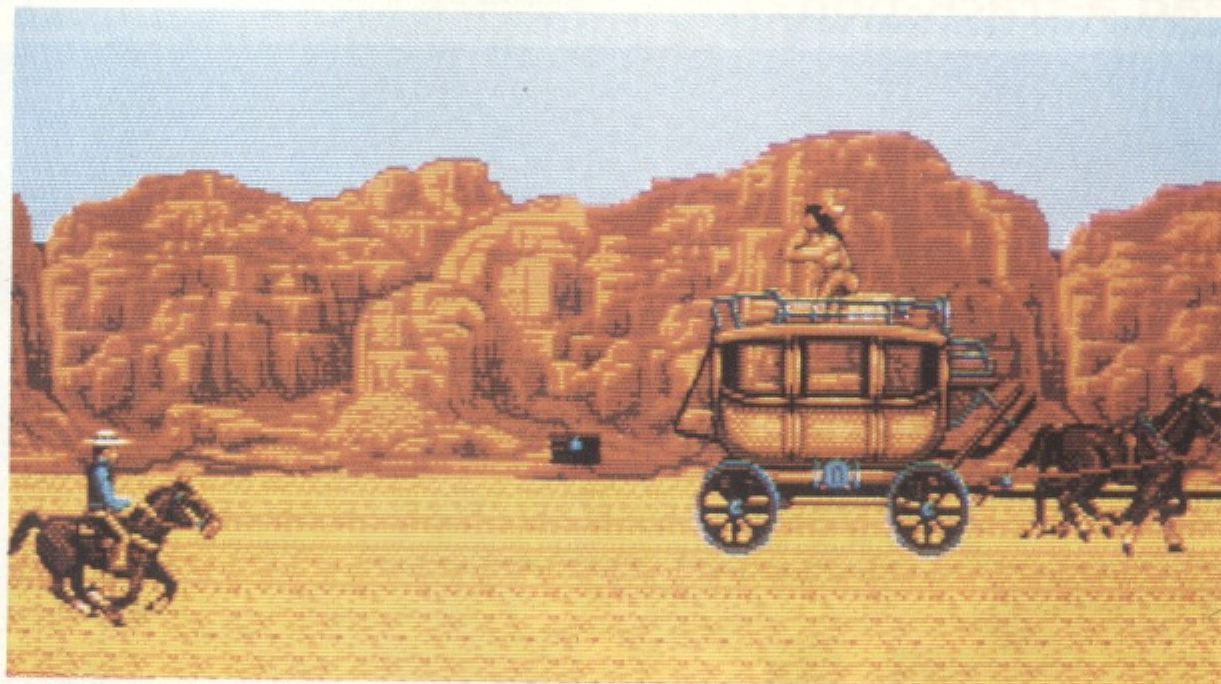


Bill's Games





Trick Shooting is split into two sections. The first involves blasting away at cardboard targets in a kind of western shooting gallery. Points are scored for wiping out the bad guys, but you're eliminated if you hit an innocent bystander or shoot someone in the back. In the second section your gun mettle is further put to the test – bottles are thrown into the air and you've got to shoot them before they crash to the ground.



The injuns have captured a stagecoach, occupants and all, and it's your job to get them back to safety. Having dodged the flying luggage and catching up with the stage, you climb to the roof and engage in hand-to-hand combat. You've got to work fast as the stage is fast approaching indian territory, so you must regain control before it crosses the border.



The last time a game of this type was attempted was in Epyx's World Games, where the rider had to react quickly with an action opposite to that of the bronco's. A similar approach has been adopted here, although things are made a little easier by an arrow indicating the correct direction to move in. Make the wrong move (or the right one too late) and you'll be eating dust before you know it.

ST Like Tynesoft's previous effort, Circus Games, this is a brave attempt at taking the sports simulation out of the athletics stadium and trying something more diverse, but it doesn't quite come off. There are just about enough events to make the whole thing seem worthwhile, but it doesn't take long to get each one off pat. Unlike the Epyx series, there's not enough diversity in the control modes – surely the programmers could have thought of something more original than a free-floating crosshair for the Shooting and Knife-Throwing? Bronco Riding, Steer Wrestling and Calf Roping can be fun at first, but again the appeal is limited – the gameplay is too basic. The Stage Coach Rescue is marginally the most fun to play, but this falls down too as it doesn't fit in with the rodeo feel of the rest of the proceedings. A shame really, as some very nice graphics have gone to waste. Colour has been put to good use, the backdrops and sprites are well defined and the intermission screens are gorgeous. This wild west compendium is initially fun to play and very nice to look at, but the enjoyment is short-lived and poor old Bill ultimately fails to realise his potential.

PRICE	£24.95
RELEASE DATE	Out Now
GRAPHICS	79%
SOUND	70%
PLAYABILITY	65%
VALUE	60%

OVERALL 64%

A Due out within the next couple of weeks at £24.95, this isn't expected to differ in any way – at the very most some of the colours and sound effects will be subject to minor change.

PC Both CGA and EGA modes will be supported, and in EGA mode it's expected to look pretty much identical to the ST and Amiga versions. Again, a release date is set for a couple of weeks time at £24.95.

Stunt Car Ra

Gary Penn takes MicroStyle's rev 'em up out for a spin and finds it's a case of fatal a-traction (or should that read a-track-tion?).





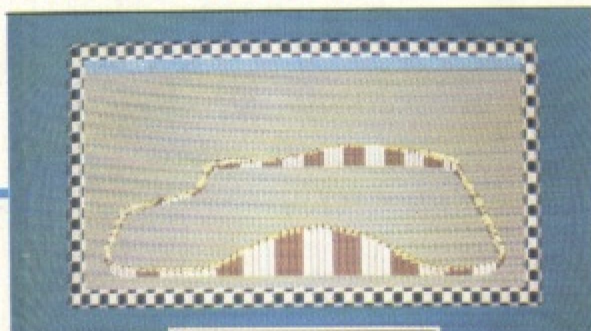
So you've raced around almost every famous race course around the world, along California highways, across a roasting desert setting and around raceways of the future. But how does this suicidal stunt grab you...

Geoff Crammond's already given us racing car thrills with Revs and off-the-wall tension with The Sentinel. Now he offers you the chance to race round a track built on logs high above the ground at break-neck speeds in a glorified beach buggy.

There are eight tracks spread over a four division league with three opponents to race against in each. As you vroom your way to the top the tracks become more arduous and the racers more skilful. So take advantage of the option to practice the two tracks in the current division.

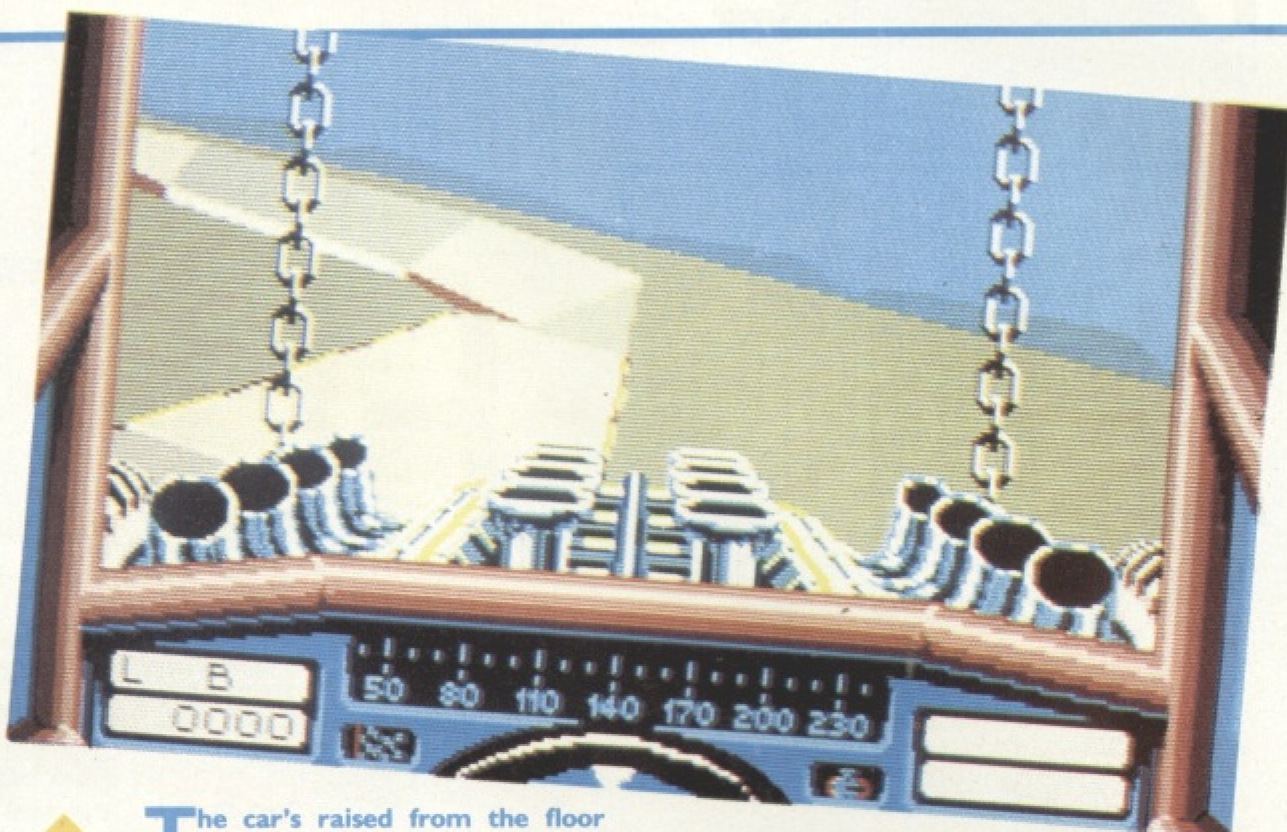


A map of the track is shown before play. The Hump Back looks awkward, but it's a piece of cake compared to later tracks, like the moving Draw Bridge in the first division.



acer

The opposition (in this case Road Hog) takes an early lead. So put the pedal to the metal and don't take your eyes off the road to watch the wheels bouncing with every bump.



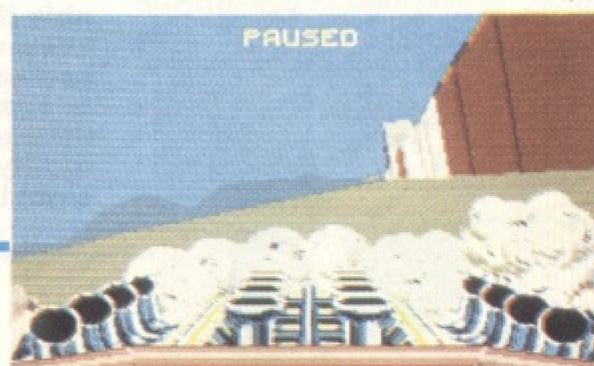
The car's raised from the floor then lowered onto the track. Prepare yourself, for as soon as your wheels touch the ground, the race begins!



Road Hog's slipping away and so are your chances of winning this division. Time to apply the Turbo Boost... flames leap from the cylinders and the speedometer rises. But remember: its use is limited.



Oo dear, took that corner too quickly did we? Looks like you fell on your fender, judging by the smoke billowing from below. Incurring damage is not good. Cracks appear in the frame work, sparks fly and ultimately things stop working and the car becomes a write off. Lucky the car can be repaired at the end of each race.



ST

The effect of speed is excellent, and the realistic feeling of racing at height is sure to unnerve even the least acrophobic among us. It must be said, this is how EA's Powerdrome should have felt (it certainly had plenty of exciting gameplay elements). Stunt Car Racer feels quite wonderful and offers sufficient lasting challenge with the league system and the datalink option, which allows two ST or Amiga owners to race against each other. This is all very well for anyone suitably equipped, but the less fortunate among us you can't help wishing for more variety in the courses – even psuedo-random ones. How about an add-on disk?

PRICE	£24.99
RELEASE DATE	September
GRAPHICS	86%
SOUND	78%
PLAYABILITY	90%
VALUE	79%

OVERALL 84%

A

A version is in production and should be ready in time for an October release at the same price at the Atari incarnation. Major differences are distinctly unlikely.

PC

Almost complete and looking – and more importantly, playing – every bit as good as it does on the ST. Priced at the same point as its 16-bit counterparts, MS-DOS Stunt Car Racer should be spare tyre-ing its way up the charts in September.

THE FUTURE BEGINS

Watch out Flash Gordon, here we come... into the 21st Century. It used to sound such a long way off, but the year 2000 is just around the corner. Heavens! Gary Penn will be 34 (he hopes) and the oldest man in the whole world will be... well, dead most probably.



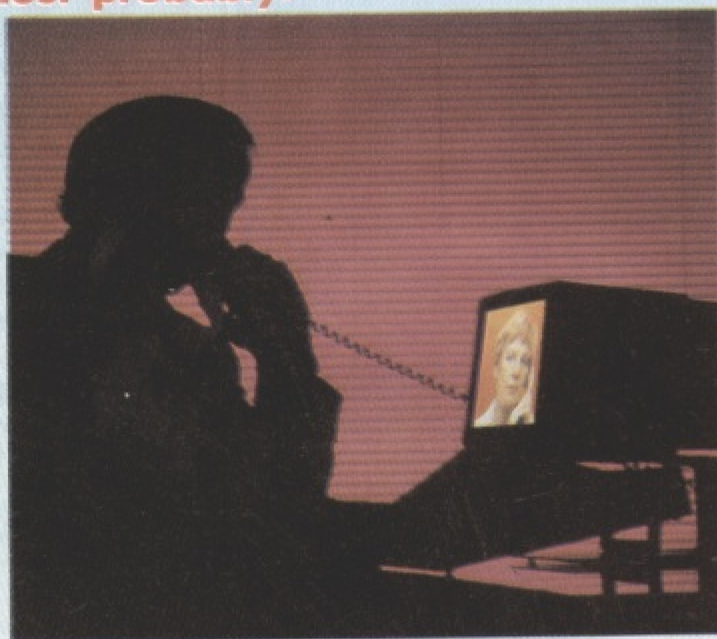
The Daily Express Lifestyles 2000 show, held at Olympia between July 8th-16th, gave us the opportunity to see what are currently considered playthings for the rich and famous, but will be commonplace toys for the boys in 11 years' time. And all through green-tinted glasses.

Predictably, satellite television companies were in abundance, with Sky, British Satellite Broadcasting and NEC flaunting their wares alongside nuclear fuel, bubbly spa baths and BBC's Tomorrow's World 'Studio', which invited exhibition-goers to interact with such interesting innovations as 'magic' glass which never gets dirty (ever ever).

However, anyone who went expecting to see anything like a kettle which not only turns itself off and lets you know it's done so, but also brews your cuppa and drinks it for you, came away disappointed. There were no teleporters, no space planes, not even a Moonbase Alpha (and that should have been built in 1999).

No Sir Clive Sinclair, no 'got-to-have-one' gadgets, not even a stand devoted to how the past saw the future (The 21st Century According To Hollywood etc), which would have been amusing – and relevant. No CD ROM. No interactive telly... In fact, fun isn't going to be 'in' in the year 2000 by the looks of things... computer entertainment at this show was restricted to a shoebox stand featuring a Tarby and Forsyth industry combination of Popcorn Computer Weakly and Electronic Arts.

One thing's for sure: the future isn't what it used to be...



In a more Science Fiction becoming Science Fact vein, the Philips' Videophone is sure to impress. And if the idea of seeing or being seen while making a call worries you, don't let it. The conversation can be as aural as you want it to be. Movement is in slow motion, with the image updated a couple of times every second, but it's effective enough to kill the art of telephone conversation.

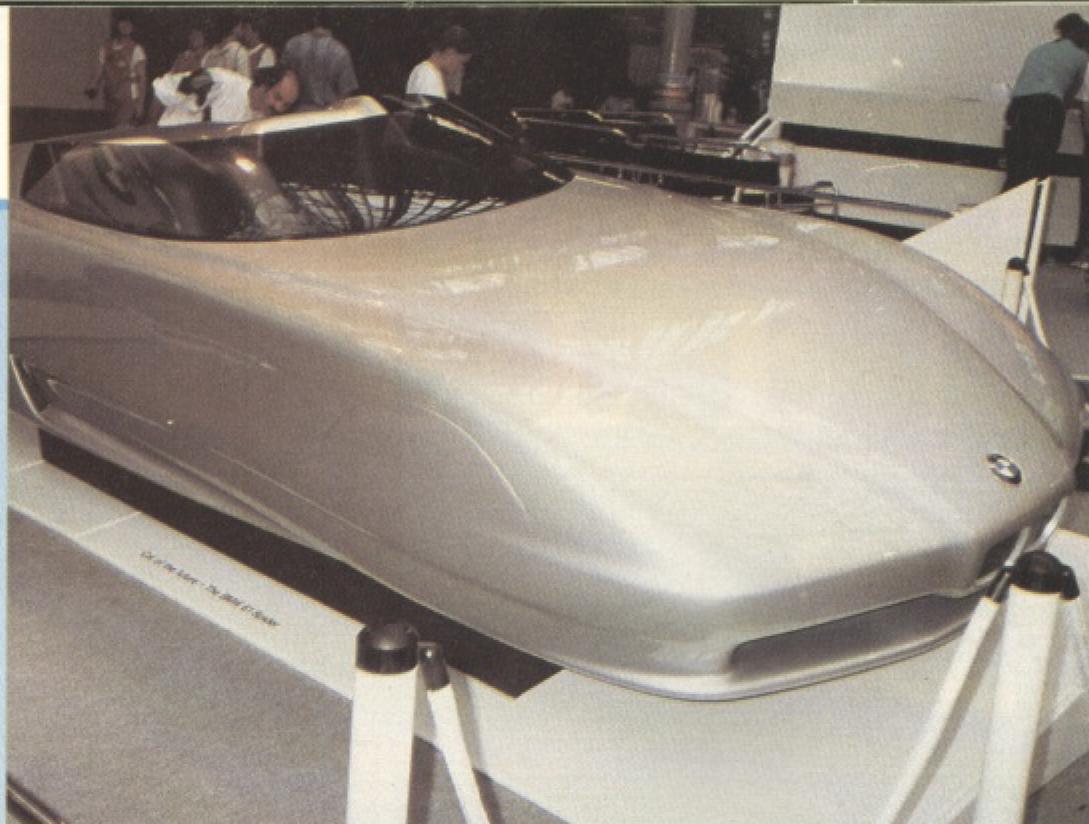


With the thermostat on our global greenhouse going ga-ga, what's likely to be the in gear for the 2,000th year? Will it be scientists as opposed to designers which provide the answer with clothing which is so unoticeable it's unoticeable? Sadly, this question wasn't answered. The fashionable favourites for the future seem to be variations on the cycle and ski wear theme. Mind you, the former is understandable what with the recent trend of commuters taking to bicycles in an attempt to beat the strikes. Flares are definitely dead (which won't please our trendy publisher), and the hippest hipster will probably be wearing Rorschach blots and zebra stripes which move with every movement.



Move over Filofax. Come the next century, paper will be passé and for the plebs. Silicon's the stuff for the smart city slicker, with Psion Organisers and the Sharp IQ padding the pocket. The Sharp IQ features a calendar, a calculator, a world clock with the accurate time in 212 cities, telephone directory and, best of all, interchangable IC cards covering even more categories and capabilities – like a spell checker cum thesaurus, and the facility to translate eight languages!



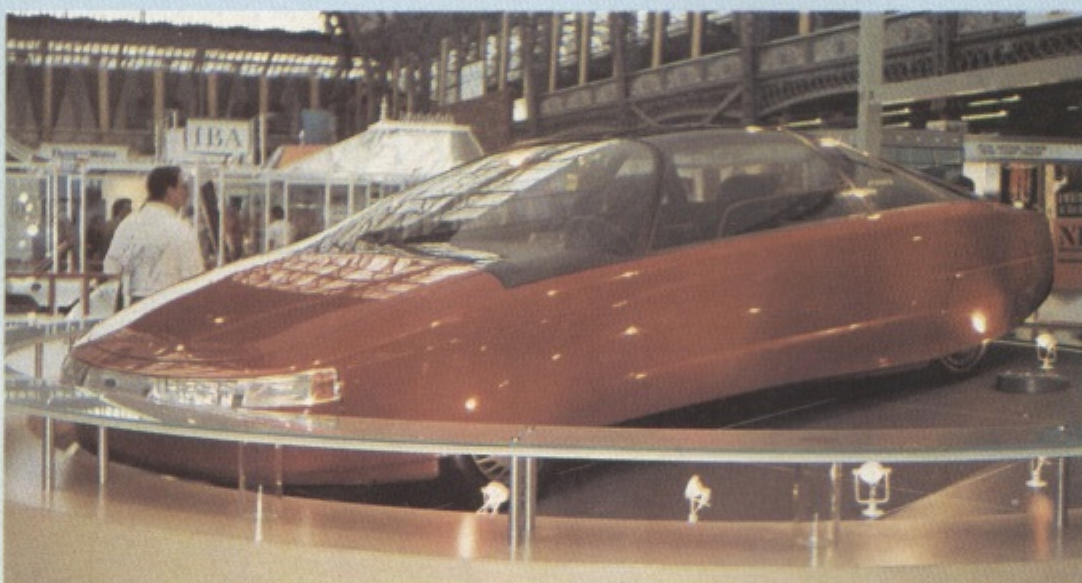




Ford claims its Probe V is more aerodynamically efficient than an F-15 jet fighter. Powered by a turbocharged 1.9 litre, 16-valve, four-cylinder engine, it's driven in a more traditional manner, with wrap-over sliding doors, an electro-optical system which replaces conventional side mirrors by projecting vehicle images on a screen near the instrument panel. It also looks rather swish.

BMW unveiled its end-of-century concept car, a sleek looking beast resembling a speed boat. The El, or Spider as it's affectionately known, started life as a special design study by BMW design engineers. The company is now working on the car's advanced aircraft-based technology, which will be packed into BMWs by the end of the century. Theory has it that computer controlled cars will be equipped with lasers and microwave technology and will be able to run at very high speeds – without fear of accident. Vroomsters will be able to enter an access road and leave the computer to do the driving – at a 155mph cruising speed in the case of the Spider – on the super highways of tomorrow.





TOMORROW



In-Car Systems Ltd in conjunction with Philips has produced a device which is intended to provide convenience and safety for drivers. The multiplex allows you to operate the cellular phone and facsimile, control the stereo, open windows and slide back the sunroof... all thanks to a keyboard in the centre of the steering wheel. The Multiplex also serves as an anti-theft device with the driver having to enter a personal security code to mobilise his vehicle.

Trekkies will delight in the Mercury Callpoint, a small portable phone which bears a passing resemblence to the Star Trek communicators. A nationwide network of strategically positioned Callpoint base stations means that you can call anyone, anytime from almost anywhere... well, provided you aren't more than 200 metres away from a base. Now the next time you get stuck in a traffic jam during the rail strike, you too can plead 'Beam me up Scotty'...



COMPETITION



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COPIES OF BOMB THE BASS' INTO THE DRAGON ALSO UP FOR GRABS! All courtesy of Image Works

High quality shoot 'em up action needs high quality sound to match. And what better ham and egg combination than Xenon II and its soundtrack, a thumping good rendition of Bomb The Bass' Megablast (Hip Hop On Precinct 13), as found on the album Into The Dragon.

And as fate would have it, a Compact Disc version of the album can be yours... along with a Sharp Integrated CD Hi-Fi System to play it on – earsplitterama!

Apart from the usual array of buttons and lights, this black beauty features a stereo radio, cassette deck, CD player, and detachable speakers.

Ten runners-up will each get a copy of Into The Dragon on either LP or cassette. How? By correctly answering the following three questions and completing the tie-breaker.

1) Who are the Bitmap Brothers?
2) What was Bomb The Bass' first chart smash?
3) Image Works' previous shoot 'em up was by Tony Crowther – what was it called?

AND NOW... THE 'IT'S A GAS' TIE-BREAKER

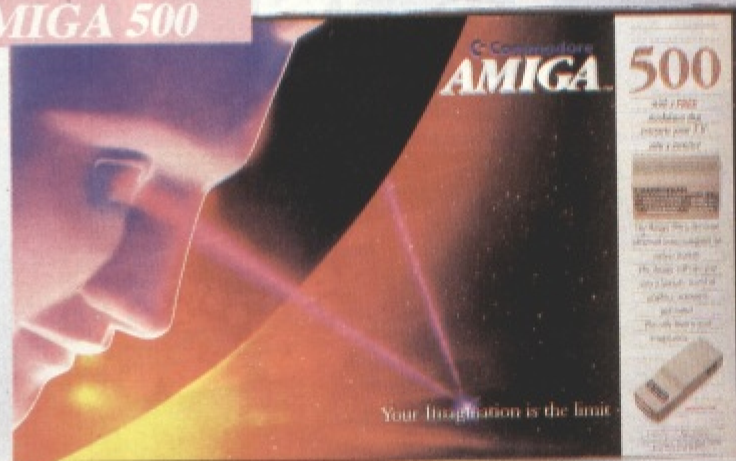
In Typical The One Style, all you have to do is tickle our ribs with a humourous gas-related joke (but try to avoid trouser gas, eh?).

Completed entries should be taped to a powerfully equipped spaceship and flown along a vertically scrolling landscape to: Xenon With The Show, The One, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Employees of EMAP, Mirrorsoft and all of their related companies don't stand a chance of winning, so forget it.

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PRINTING DIRECTION	bi-directional, with optimised head movement
PRINT PITHES	10 char/in to 24/char/in programmable from line, and in SET-UP mode
LINE FEED	– 1/6in (4.23 mm), 1/8 (3.17 mm) and 7/72 in (2.4 mm); – n/216 in and n/72 in.
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DEMOS

Fiiive . . . Foouur . . . Threee . . . Twoooo . . . One . . . no, not the swinging sounds of the Dave Clark Five getting down, but the sampled sounds of Mr Tracey counting down in the **Thunderbirds Silver Jubilee Demo.** Unfortunately this and the rest of the theme tune from the television program is the best bit about it.

In a more athletic vein there's the **Gymnast Animation.** No prizes for guessing what it features, but suffice to say a polygon person does the business on a single parallel bar. It's short-lived, short on laughs and short-oo please.

So you missed it in the cinema the first time around and by some bizzare twist of fate didn't get to see it on video or telly. Now here's your chance to see . . . well, at least a minute's worth of action in **Star Wars – The Movie.** A series of very brief animations and accompanying dialogue have been digitised from the film . . . and no doubt anyone into this sort of thing will derive great satisfaction from it.

A more imaginative use of digitised imagery and sounds is evident in Radical Systems' **RoboMix Demo,** featuring two sampled slice of Art Of Noise tunes complete with sampled speech and digitised scenes from the film **RoboCop.**

And finally Cyril . . .

And finally, Esther . . . Joining the ever expanding range of 'playable previews' available on Public Domain are Delphine's **Bio Challenge,** Novagen's **Backlash,** Dinamic's **Navy Moves,** Psygnosis' **Blood Money** and Electric Dreams' **Wicked.**

GET YOUR DEMOS HERE

ATARI ST

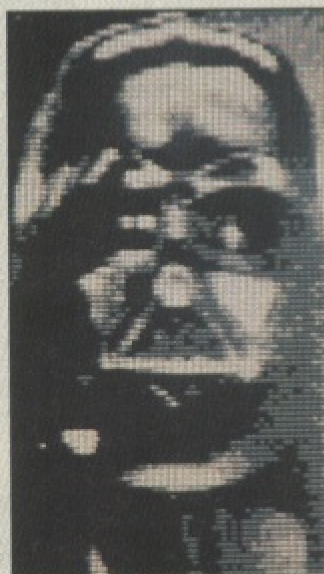
Star Wars – The Movie, the **Bio Challenge** Demo and the **Backlash** Demo were supplied by The Other PD Library, 108 Kenmare Road, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 3HQ.

The **Thunderbirds Silver Jubilee** is available from The Poltergeists, 63 Wintringham Way, Purley On Thames, Reading, Berks RG8 8BH. Tel: 0734 428492.

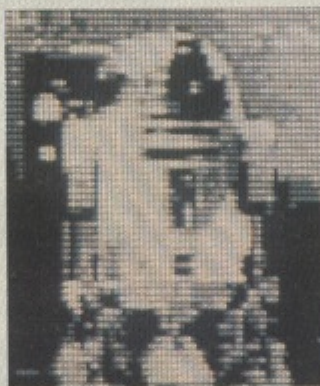
AMIGA

Get your demos of **Blood Money** (DISK 355), **Wicked** (DISK 383) and **Navy Moves** (DISK 413) from 17 bit Software, PO Box 97, Wakefield, Yorkshire, WF1 1XX. Tel: 0924 366982. 17 bit has hundreds more besides, including some super House sounds (DISK 412).

The **Gymnast Animation** (1 Mb ONLY) can be obtained from Ray Burt-Frost, 169 Dale Valley Rd, Hollybrook, Southampton SO1 6QX. Send a jiffy bag (with stamps to cover the cost of return post) and a blank disk for further details.



"YOUR powers are weak old man . . ."



"BEEE-doop Wheeep-booop . . ."

"LOOK at the size of that thing . . ."

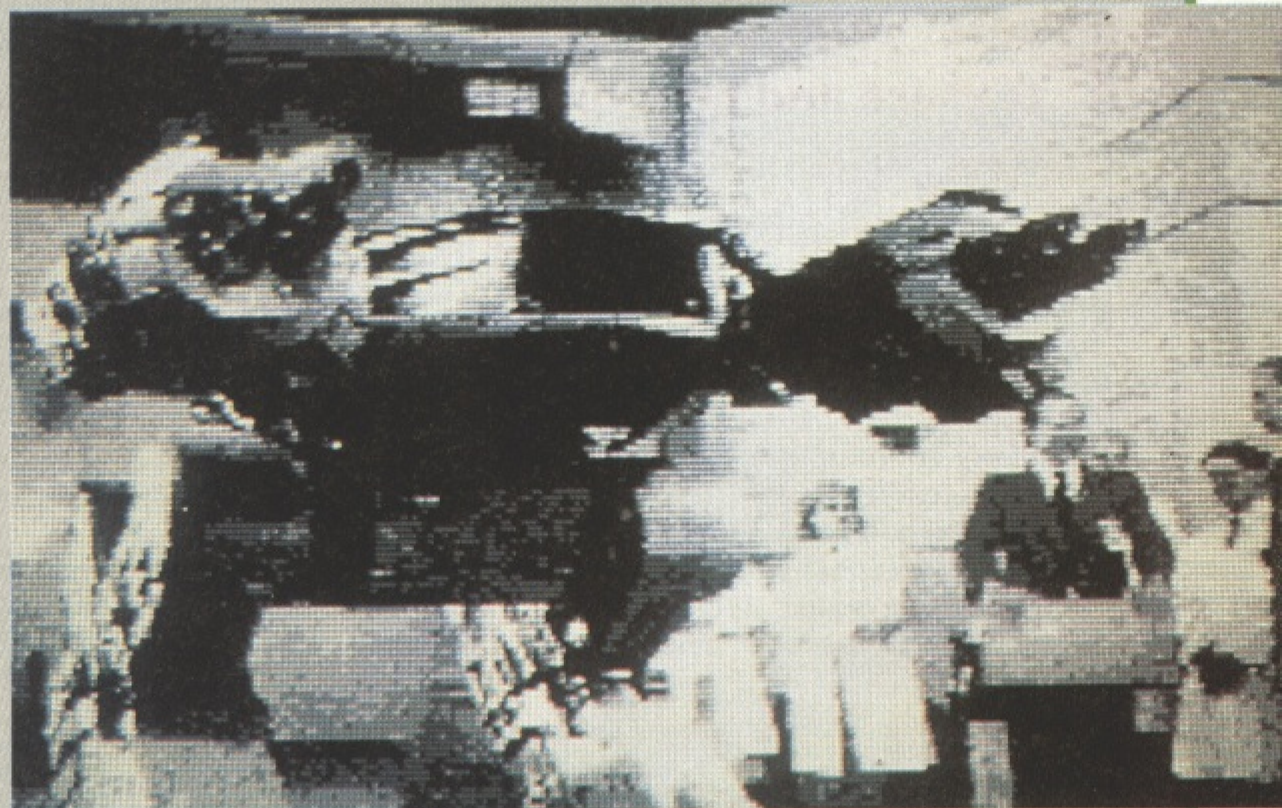


"USE the force, Luke . . .

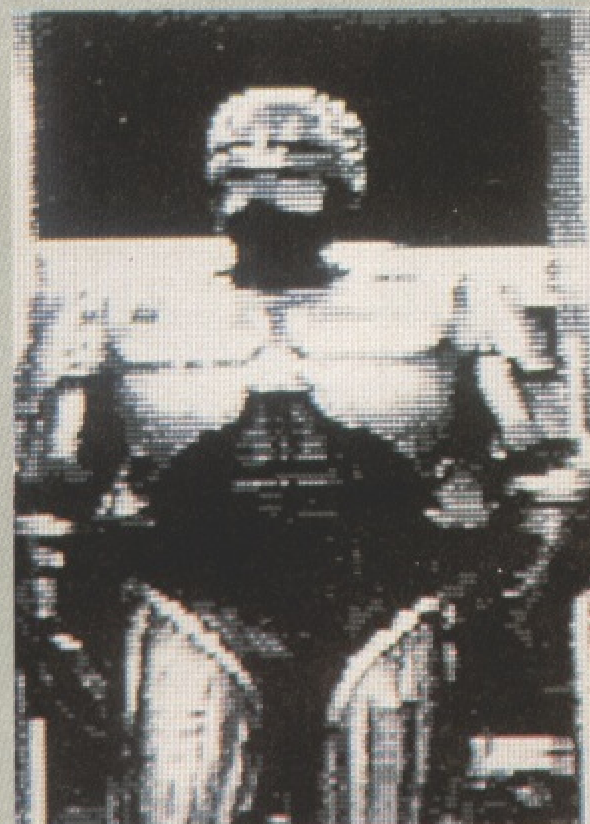


ANIMATED athletic antics in the Gymnast Animation.





"PUT down your weapon."



"A COP with superior firepower . . ."



Grafix

Feast your eyes as Phil South checks out texture and how to get it, plus animation tips, colour co-ordination, world problems solved... is there no end to this boy's talents?

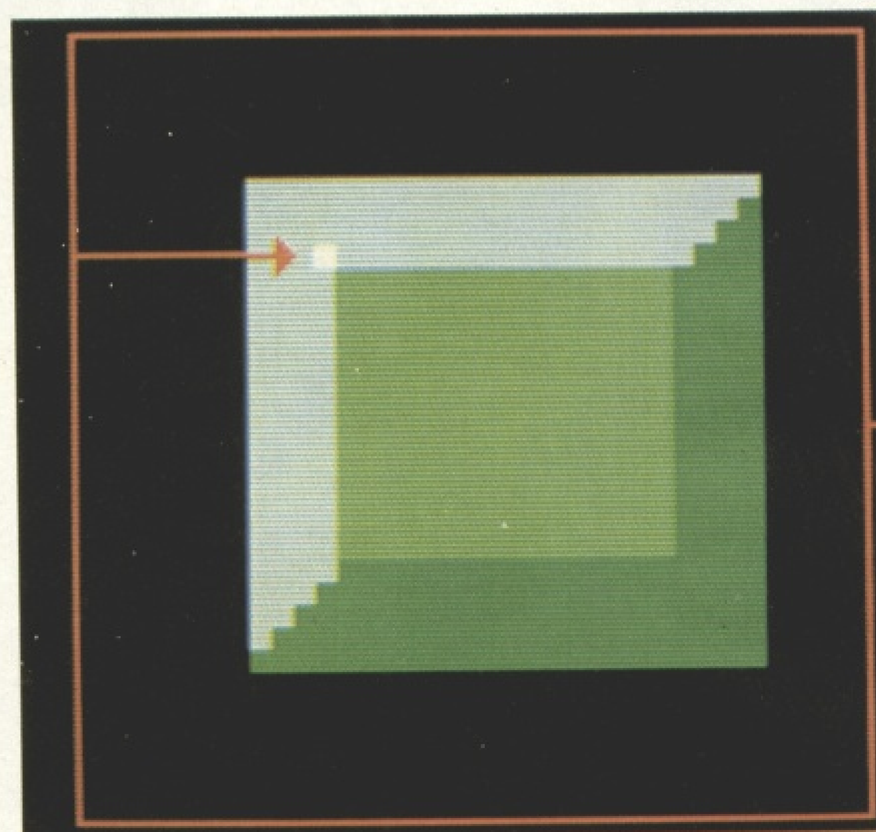
Surface texture, or the smoothness and colour of an object, is one of the hardest things to get right in computer graphics, but there are certain processes you can use to get a better grip on what your computer-drawn objects are supposed to look like, and give them that touch of class.

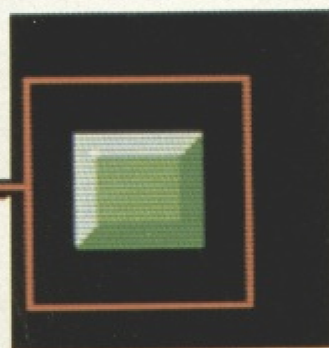
Any object has a certain sheen which shows it up to be shiny, matt or plain, and light playing on your objects must bounce off correctly or it looks wrong.

These effects must either be learned or observed.

A good way to get started is once again to check out the effects used in games that you like. Use a screen grabber program to capture and study the graphics, and work out how it was all done.

You can look at objects around the house that have the same texture as what you'd like to draw, and copy them. Or how about these tips to make your work better right away?





◄ There are all sorts of tricks you can try which are easy to do and very effective, like the old dot in the corner ploy for example! Simply place a white dot at the corner of an object and it instantly looks classy and glossy. Isn't this the reason you buy this mag, all these easy tips? Yes, I thought so.



▲ Drawing from life is the easiest way to get effects of your own. Find an object with the reflective quality you like, and draw it while looking at it. This way you not only get the effect you want, but you're not relying on a formula to get your effect, you're learning your own methods!

The Bitmap Brothers (**Xenon, Speedball** etc.) are black belts at this sort of thing, so I asked Bros spokesman, Eric Matthews, what techniques they use for their own brilliant graphics. We kicked off by talking about the approach they took to designing objects.

EM "In **Xenon II** we're trying to get away from just the metallic backdrop, and get a lot more things we are organic, like marbling on rocks etc."

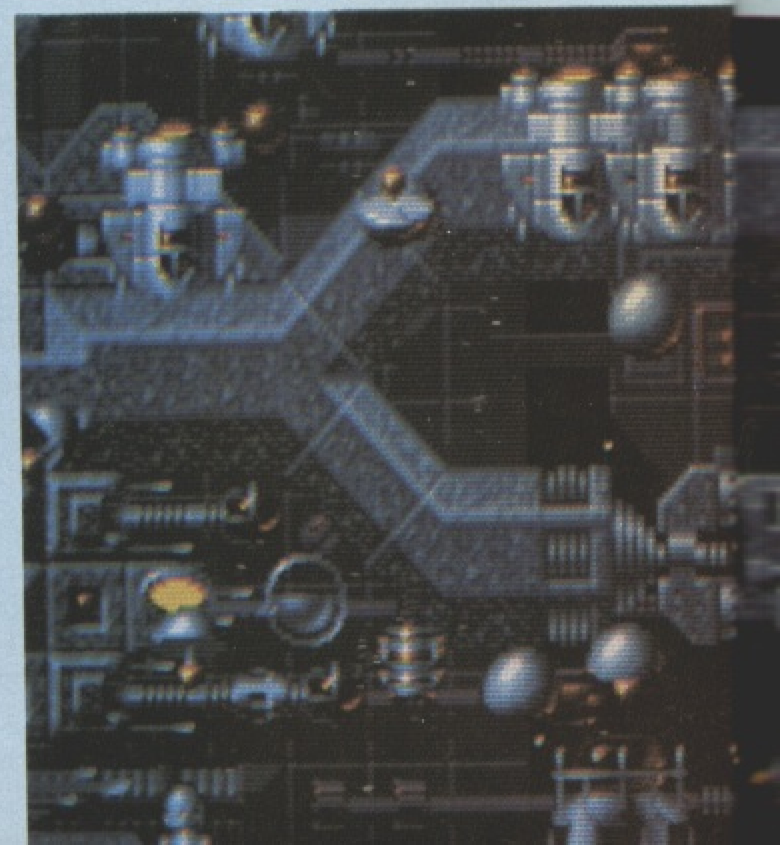
PS So what makes a good texture then?



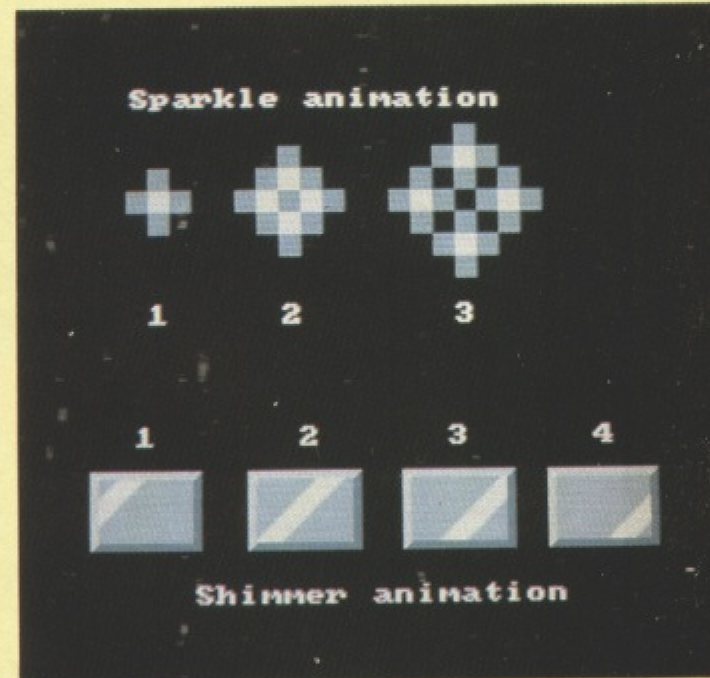
EM "It's really difficult to explain, you have to show someone how you do it! If you're doing something chrome, it's a typical airbrush effect, just horizontal bars of white and tones of grey at the top and then you'd probably run it into a different colour, maybe a blue or an orange at the bottom."

PS A bit like a reflection of blue sky and sand, yeah?

EM "That's it. And then just run a white line around it, put a highlight top left, or wherever your light source is. If it's a satiny finish you'd have to flare the highlight out a bit more, using greys. Not so harsh, in effect, smooth it out a bit. Take a white highlight and surround it with concentric circles of a few darker shades of grey."

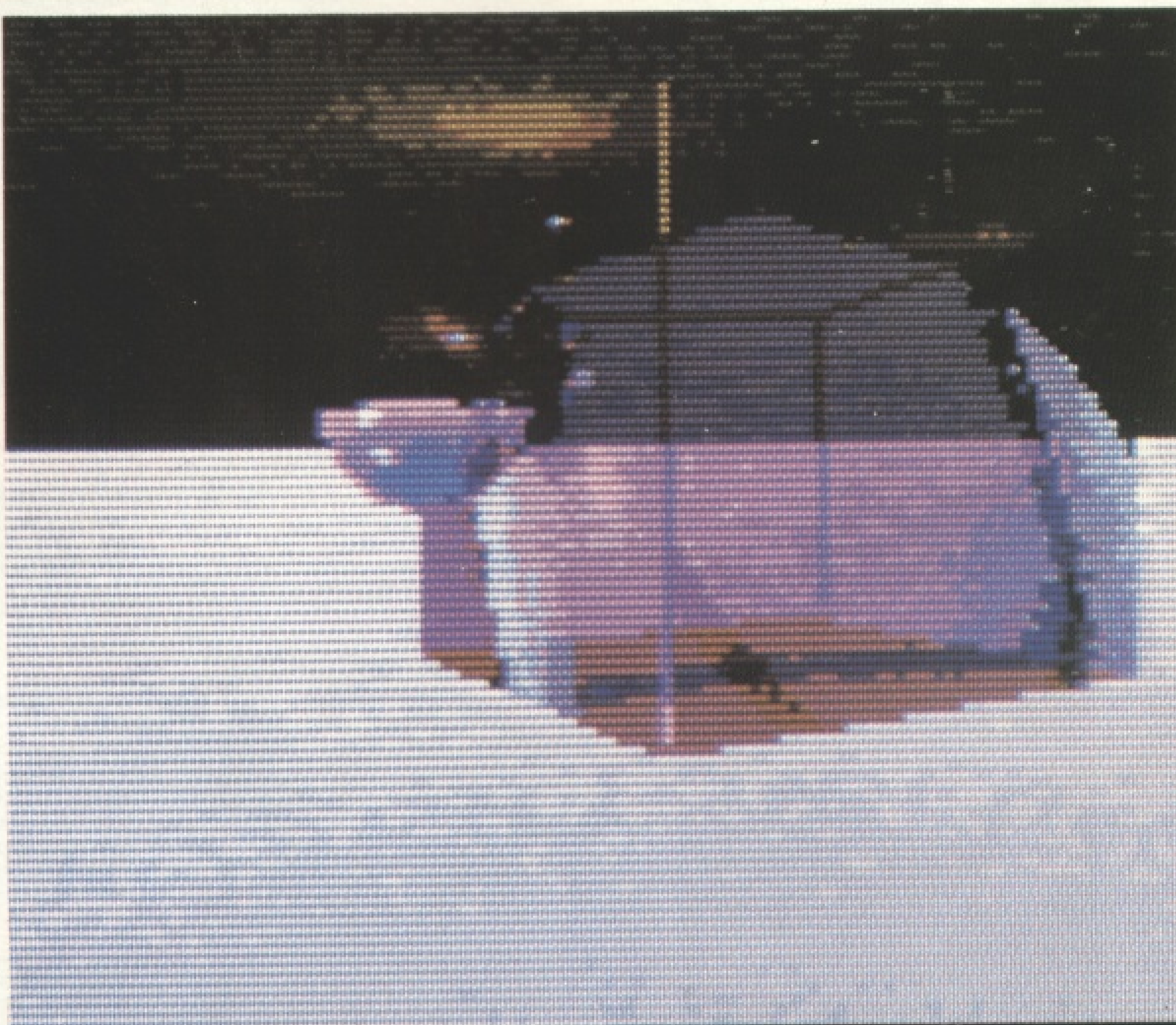






The glint or shimmer is a way of showing up an object's specular or reflective characteristics. In other words, things look shiny if they glint. Glints or sparkles are easier to animate than a shimmer. A shimmer is a band of grey which moves over the surface of a flat shiny object – for a good example of this effect, check out the bricks in Arkanoid. It's difficult to achieve this effect, as you have to tint the colours underneath rather than cover them.

Ray-tracing programs, like the Sculpt 3D package from Byte By Byte used here, calculate specular information from imaginary light rays hitting the surface and bouncing off. As an idea you could generate a shape in this package and save it as a picture file, meaning you can edit and use it in future drawings.



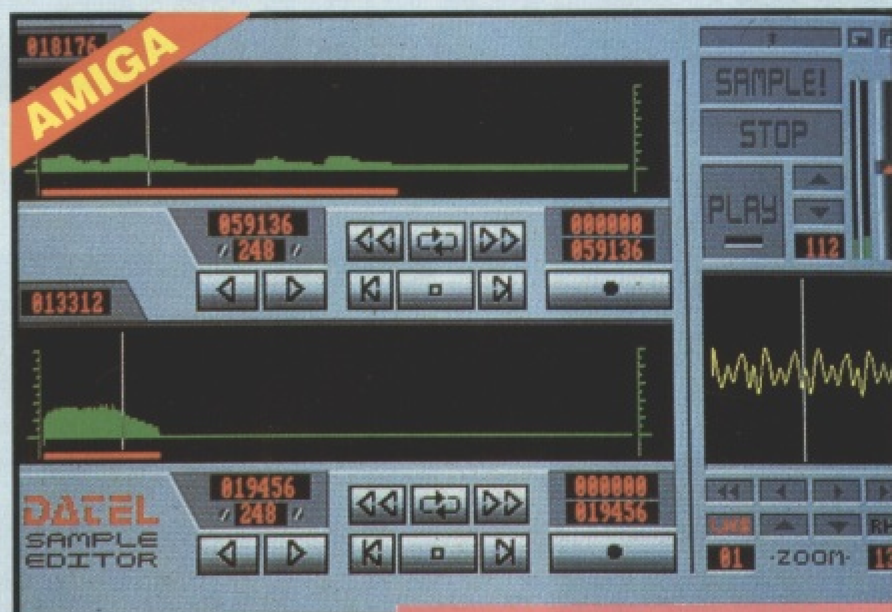
PS So what about the big one. Glass or transparent objects...?

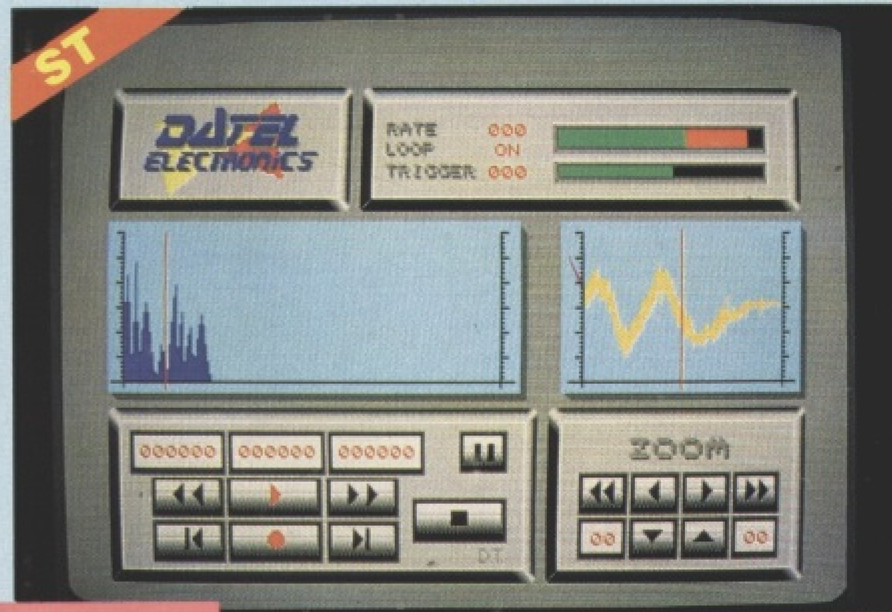
EM "Yeah, make them see-through. Really easy... (laugh) I don't know whether you've seen **Xenon II**, but there's these bubbles, and they're see-through. They've got highlights on the top left, a different darker tone running around the bottom right. Basically it's just drawn in colour 0, the transparent tone, the background colour."

PS You don't have to re-colour the stuff underneath as it travels across then?

EM "Oh no, you can get away without that, it's an illusion. On **Xenon II** it still looks like it's distorting the background, but it's not. It's just a see-through object!A lot of effects are discovered like that, by just trying things out."

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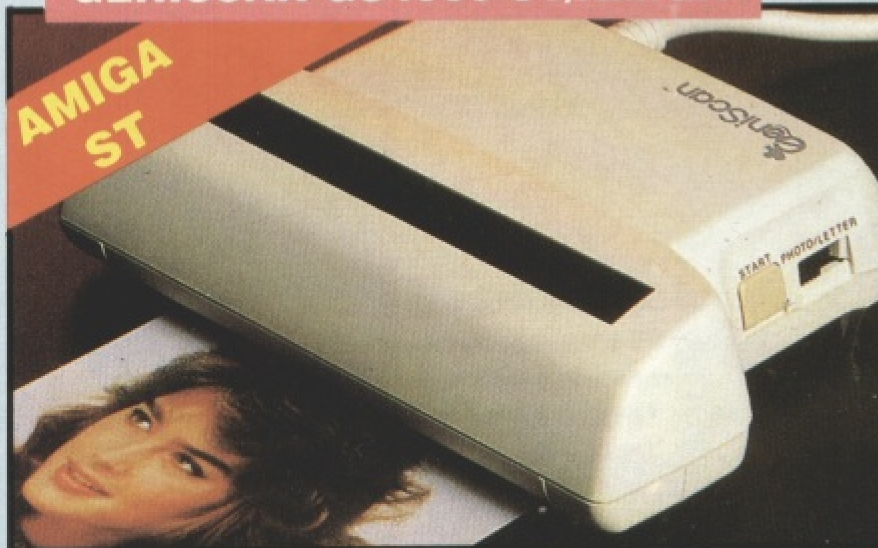
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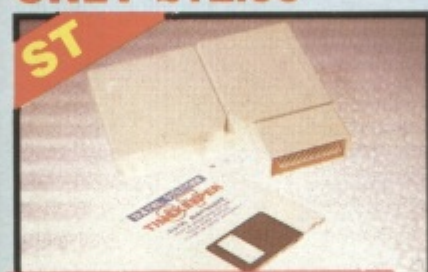
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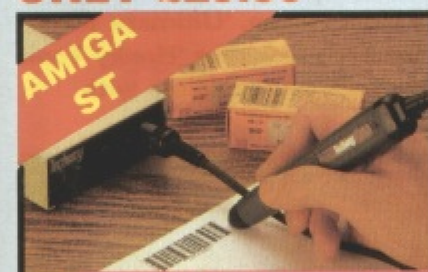
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ACE 3

A sweaty joystick in one hand and an ice lolly in the other, Gary Whitta braves the heat of London's Electrocoin arcade to keep you up with the coin-ops...

WWF SUPER STARS



GANG WARS



CRIME CITY



WILLOW



WWF SUPER



The World Wrestling Federation is no place for wimps – something that Technos makes quite clear in its latest effort. WWF Superstars is a simulation of American Tag-Team Wrestling – not so much a sport, more an over-the-top form of no-holds-barred violent entertainment that's a major crowd-puller in the States.



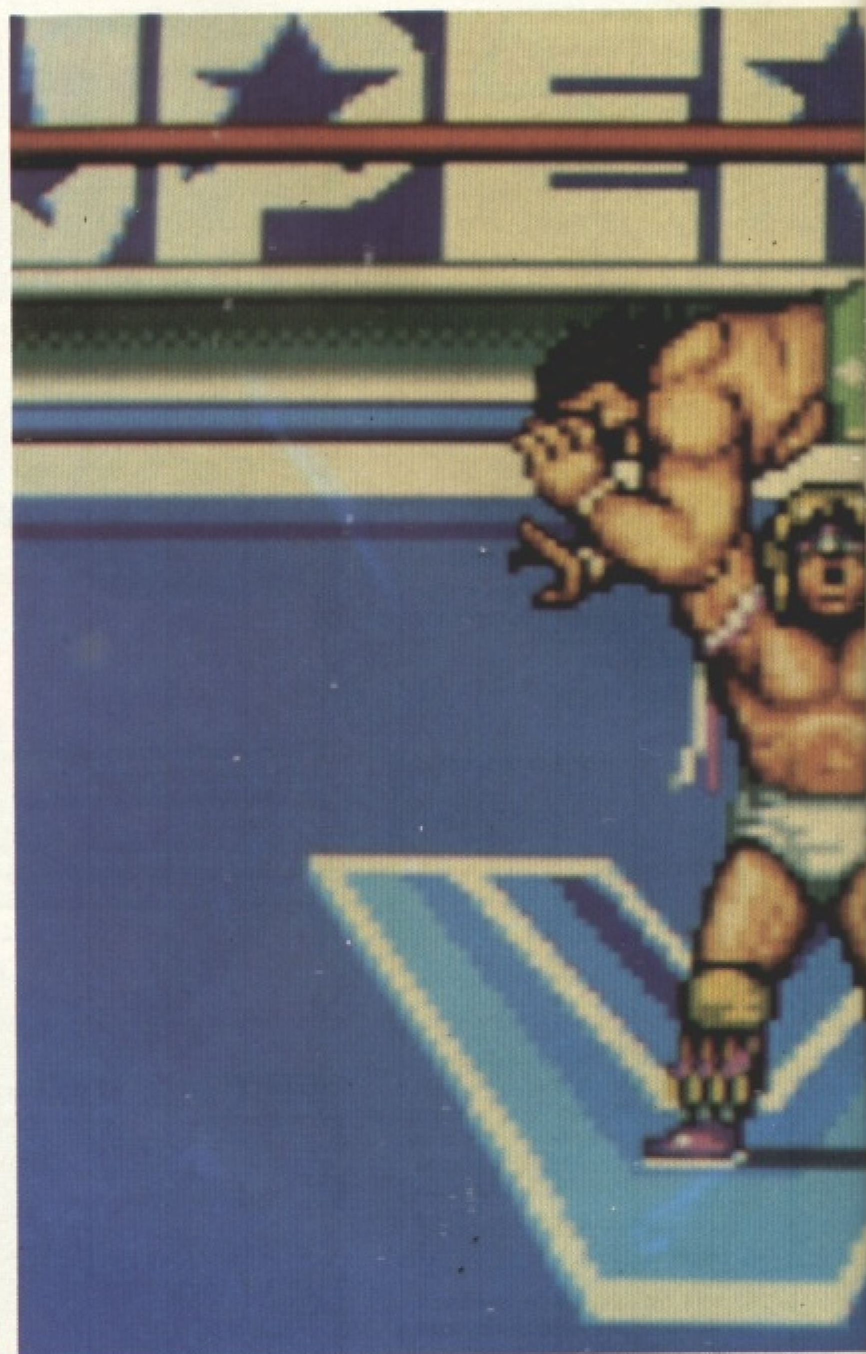
The rules are simple enough. One fall or a knockout decides the winner, but actually managing to pin or batter your opponent into defeat is a great deal more complicated. There are plenty of techniques at your disposal – you can kick, punch, throttle, throw, spin, knee, head-butt and jump on and elbow your opponent to reduce his energy level to zero, at which point you can pin him to the canvas to win the bout.



When a wrestler is taking too savage a beating it's time to 'tag'. Make your way to the corner of the ring where your partner is cheering you on and hit the tag button to bring him into play and give the weary wrestler a rest. Rules state that only two wrestlers may be in the ring at a time, but these rules frequently go straight out of the nearest available window.



The action in WWF Superstars is cringingly realistic – you can almost feel the elbow slams. Once you get the moves down, WWF is tremendous fun, with the 'tag' element especially adding to the fun.



There are eight wrestlers to choose from, including the legendary Hulk Hogan, 'Ultimate Warrior' (a heavy metal refugee), the Elvis lookalike 'Honky Tonk Man' and 'Big Boss Man', a New York cop complete with nightstick!



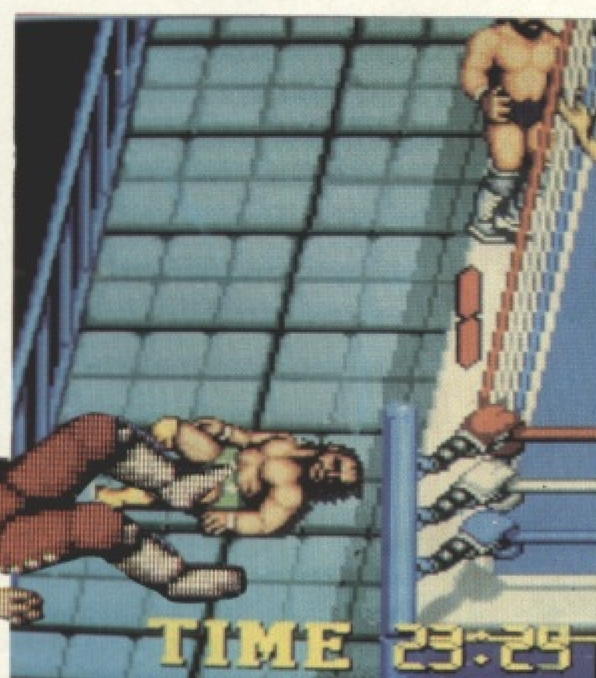
STARS





WWF's wrestling action is drenched in OTT TV presentation – the wrestlers are driven around the ring in a motorcade (much to the amusement of the screaming fans) before each bout and screen for a rematch when beaten.





GANG WARS

Time once again to take to the crime-ridden south side of New York and embark on a frenzy of good old fashioned street violence for no particular reason. Like *Double Dragon*, *Double Dragon II*, *Downtown* and *Crime Fighters* before it, Alpha's *Gang Wars* is a two-player scrolling beat 'em up that pits you (and an optional friend) against an army of degenerate street punks.

The two players may look different (one is streetwise vigilante, the other a kung-fu master) but their fighting styles are the same. Each has a volley of kicks and punches at his disposal, and can pick up and use objects and weapons found along the way. You can swing baseball bats and bottles, wield concrete girders (!) and throw rocks – in a style all-too similar to *Double Dragon's*.





CRIME CITY

Somebody at Taito must be a big fan of Miami Vice: the two stars of Chase HQ, Raymond and Tony are unmistakeable Crockett and Tubbs lookalikes and they're now making a second appearance in this, a psuedo sequel.

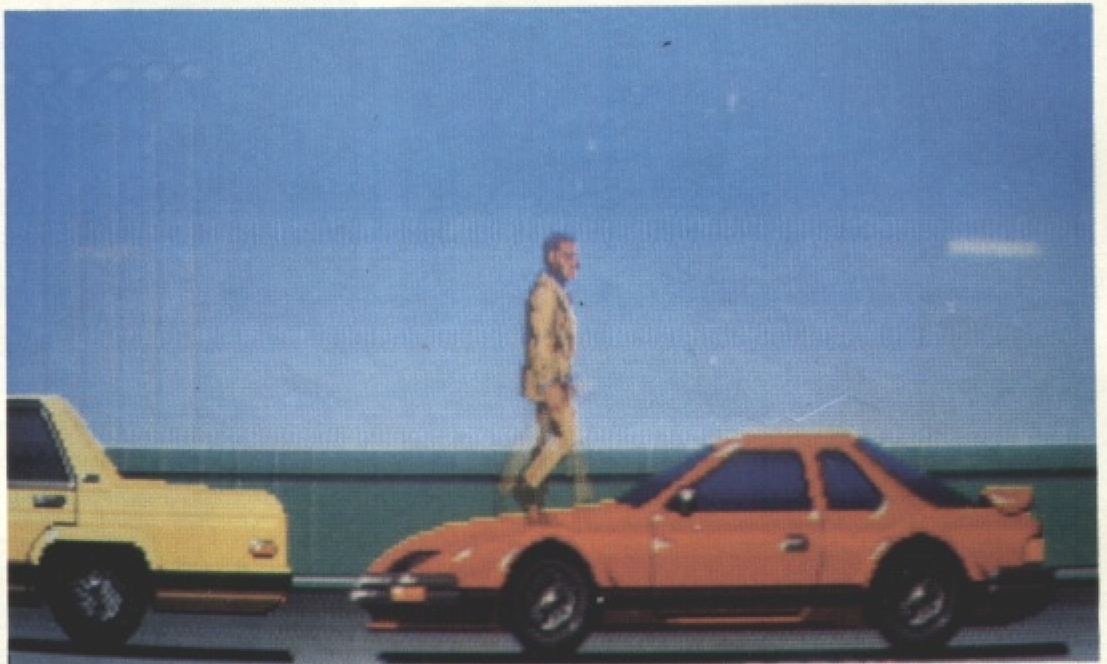
There's practically no plot (just like the show really!), but compensation comes in the form of high-calibre firefights and buckets of blood. "Crush out the crime! We're the supreme law!" yell Tony and Ray before hitting the streets to waste serious numbers of pimps, users, muggers, murderers and TV licence dodgers.

The main section is a RoboCop-style horizontal shoot-out, with the two cops without socks blasting their way through a never-ending Army of felons. Along the way they pick up machine guns boasting rapid and three-way firepower for more efficient villain-wasting.

Sections end with a massive 3D firefight, with villains rushing on screen, opening fire and then diving for cover. The big boys occasionally drive across screen in flashy sports cars, with a machine gun blazing away from the window. When all the perps have been blown away, it's back to the horizontal action.

While Crime City doesn't offer anything new, it's well executed and the action comes thick and fast, (with one of the highest body counts seen in a coin-op for some time). And with the whole thing presented in (albeit unintentional) tongue-in-cheek style, you can't go far wrong.

The action hots up on the second level as the boys attempt to stop a gang from escaping in a convoy of sports cars. The cops make their way to the 'boss' car at the tail end of the convoy by leaping from boot to bonnet. Should either cop mistime his jump he slips and falls under the wheels of the approaching car and is unceremoniously squashed.







The scene is set as Ray and Tone are woken in the small hours by a phone call from the 'loo-tenant': "Get up and go bust some crooks", he bellows. "Yo!" they shout back before strapping on their shoulder holsters. Inspired scriptwriting!

88

87

The violence is very passé. Your opponents don't bleed when hit and when they finally die after a hefty battering they flicker away unrealistically. The collision detection is also a bit suspect – you don't seem to be any more dangerous when you're clutching a concrete girder than when you're bare handed!

This fighting effort doesn't offer enough of an improvement over Double Dragon – although die-hard beat 'em up fans will probably go for it.



Only half way through the level and the action is already too hot to handle as you do battle atop a garage roof.



WILLOW

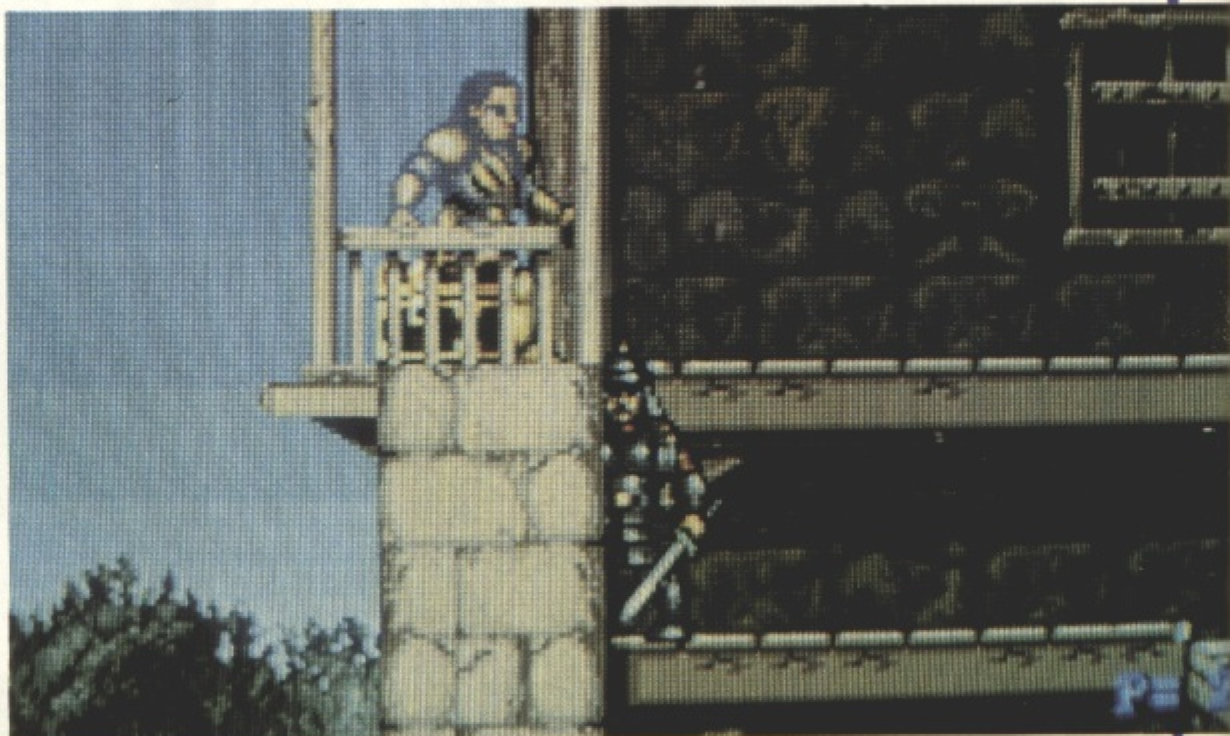
Despite George Lucas' latest fantasy epic's relative lack of commercial success, it's already sparked off a board game, a home computer game from Mindscape and now a CapCom coin guzzler. The result is a swords'n'sorcery/platforms'n'ladders shoot 'em up that bears a remarkable resemblance to the company's earlier *Ghosts 'n' Goblins*.

The plot concerns the quest of the diminutive eponymous hero, who stumbles upon an abandoned human baby, only to have it kidnapped by an evil witch. His mission is to retrieve the baby, who's actually the heir to the throne of Willowland (shock horror!). Along the way he enlists the help of Madmartigan, a freelance adventurer, and the two take off in search of the little darling.

The player controls both Willow and Madmartigan, alternating between the two characters between levels. The stumpy Willow is understandably slow and can't jump very far, but he's an expert magician and kills the palace guards by shooting them with lightning bolts. For extra devastation, hold down the magic button to 'beam up' Willow's energy and so release a deadly orb which kills everything in its path.

Madmartigan, on the other hand, is faster and more athletic, but is armed only with a sword. Fortunately each level has been designed especially for the character that appears on it, so, for example, Willow never has to do anything that Madmartigan would be better suited for.

Willow isn't a bad film interpretation, especially graphically. Willow and Madmartigan look just like their silver-screen counterparts, and some of the backdrops are just as impressive as those in the film. The gameplay however is rather limited and the appeal may be short-lived even for fans of the movie.



It's the end of the second level, and Madmartigan makes good his escape on a horse and cart with Willow at the reins. Unfortunately the palace guards are hot in pursuit...





Dying enemies release a piece of gold which comes in handy when a secret cave is reached. Here a cantakerous old wizard offers you his wares in exchange for cash. You can recharge your energy, upgrade your magical power and invest in mystical and powerful rings and charms.

Willow reaches the end of a level, only to be confronted by a super-demon summoned by the evil witch. At first it looks like a harmless puppy, but then it's struck by lightning and transforms into a huge slavering fire-breathing wolf!



D Paint



D Gibbons

If a picture paints a thousand words, the comic artist Dave Gibbons has been responsible for a couple of dictionaries' worth. And now that he's got an Amiga, who knows where the story could lead – Gary Penn and Ciarán Brennan investigate...

Dave Gibbons' love for his art has been with him since his first physics lesson. As he tells it: "I'd set up the equipment and have to do a report about the experiment with a little side-on drawing or use those stencils. Except I used to draw these detailed three dimensional works of art..."

Although Dave has been into drawing comics for as long as be can remember, it was never considered to be something that you could make a serious living out of – particularly if you lived in Hertfordshire and wanted to draw for what was at the time an American dominated medium.

Things changed however when he came across a comic book drawn by an Englishman, Barry Smith, who later went on to draw Conan**. Seeing this early effort, Gibbons thought 'I could do better than that' – and although his first efforts proved his youthful arrogance to be slightly misplaced, they did show enough potential to keep the young scribbler interested.**

Having cut his teeth on fanzines, Gibbons' break came when his work was shown to an art agent who found him work with DC Thompson, the company behind the Beano, Wizard **and** Hotspur.

Using his first work as a letterer to build up contracts, Gibbons' first published artwork came in the Wizard **where he illustrated a character called the** Scarlet Hawk **and another called** Nick Jolly **(the flying highwayman).**

Dave's since drawn for 2000AD **and** Dr Who **comics, among others, as well as the occasional 'graphic novel' such as** Watchmen **– the tome that did more than any other to raise the art form's profile as a serious medium.**

He has recently turned his hand to the writing side for a Rogue Tropper **series for** 2000AD **and was also invited to script a story for** Batman's **50th birthday, which is being drawn by Steve Rude (by name and nature apparently). On the more traditional artistic side, Dave is collaborating with Frank Miller (of** Dark Knight **fame) – but more of that later.**

In his spare time (what little of it he seems to have) Dave has lately been deriving great satisfaction from fiddling with his newly-acquired Amiga.



Using a different medium, be it pencil or brush, usually produces different results. Would this be true of using a more 'mechanical' tool such as a computer?



"When you start to produce a drawing – well, anything really – if you feel like you're playing you're likely to come up with a more creative thing than if you fell like it's work. It removes a lot of the pressure – like a word processor, there's the fact that you know that what you're doing is infinitely adaptable.

"The way I would normally produce a comic strip is to begin by drawing 'thumbnails', in other words do the comic pages very small – you have to see the overall shape of something before you get down to the details. Then I would draw it all out in pencil and then I'd ink it in.

"I tend to start with the larger shapes and then refine them and add the detail and the smaller shapes. Which is much how I find myself with a computer art package. The thing I find about using the mouse is that you tend to use your whole arm to draw with – you get more of that gestural quality. You actually get a very interesting line, like the curves that your hand naturally makes.

"I like the fact that you can mess around without feeling inhibited at all because you can very easily rectify your mistakes. You can get very nice random effects that you probably wouldn't have thought of yourself. One of the things I particularly like is the facility to actually take a part of a picture and to move it around.

"It's also a good way to try out colour combinations. What I usually do with colour work is to produce colour sketches to see what the three or four colours I'm going to use will look like together. This is something you could easily do with a computer art package. You don't need the detail, just the main shapes to try out colour schemes – and of course you can cycle through the various combinations.

"There's a lot of space for computers at both ends of the process really. However I'm not so sure they are subtle enough to comfortably produce finished artwork that doesn't look like it's been filtered through something. I would



Time Pieces... more Gibbons generated graphics.

A Line

only use a computer for finished artwork if it then became invisible that it was done on a computer."

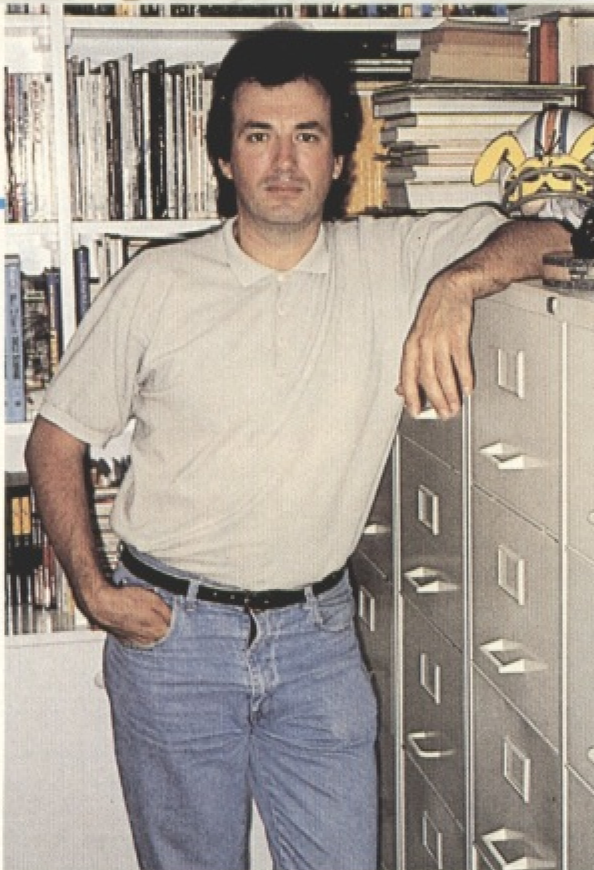
You were saying earlier how computer games are a lot more interactive than any other medium. Television is just there and you generally watch what's on, whereas with video you decide on what you want to watch and you have to put the cassette into a machine. But this fails to explain why computer games, like comics, have long been regarded as childish – in Europe anyway. Only recently have comics become a more acceptable entertainment medium with the advent of what are deemed more 'mature' Graphic Novels... Like Watchmen **and** Dark Knight. **Why do you think this is?**

"I think it's good that comics have got a wider acceptance. I've always thought that they were a legitimate medium, although they have been used from time to time to express fairly juvenile and inconsequential things – there isn't anything wrong with that, but I would like to see a greater breadth. Really it's just another way of telling a story.

"I don't like the way that certain sections of the media are only interested in comics because they think it's this year's fad. But I do think that there will be enough good material left on the beach when the tide goes out.

"The worst sort of comics are those in which nothing happens... comics written for the sake of it. The famous science fiction writer Theodore Sturgeon's Law says that 90% of everything is crap, and I certainly think that's true. It has to be. Otherwise the good stuff can't be good.

"It seems that computer games are finding their own level in the same way as comics. I think that a lot of games, like a lot of comics it must be said, are pretty banal, and pretty repetitive – sort of like chewing gum. They won't do you any harm but on the other hand they aren't likely to do much good."



Dave Gibbons: comic book artist, writer, games player and former ten-pin bowling champion...

So which games have you found fulfilling?

"I find puzzle games the most interesting. And the flight simulations... **Falcon's** brilliant. You get to the point where you think you are there and you find yourself leaning in the chair... **Rocket Ranger** is very interesting stuff, that to me is like those role playing game books. It's a different game every time you play it.

"I suppose it's a way of getting rid of the inherent aggressive side which must be in all of us... blast something away on a computer screen if you've had a hard day at work. It's a bit frightening how much you do enjoy wading through aliens, but as long as it's on a computer screen...

"It's the same with comics. I've got a sone of nine and he knows very clearly the difference between violence in a comic or on a computer screen and reality. He can see all sorts of mayhem going on in a comic book, but if he sees two people in the street with raised voices or somebody grabbing somebody else by the shirt he's horrified."

Have you developed an affinity for any particular character or publication during your prolific career?

"I like **Zippy The Pinhead** and Will Eisner's **Spirit,** but I suppose on an all-time basis my favourite comic book character would have to be something elemental like **Superman** or **Batman**."

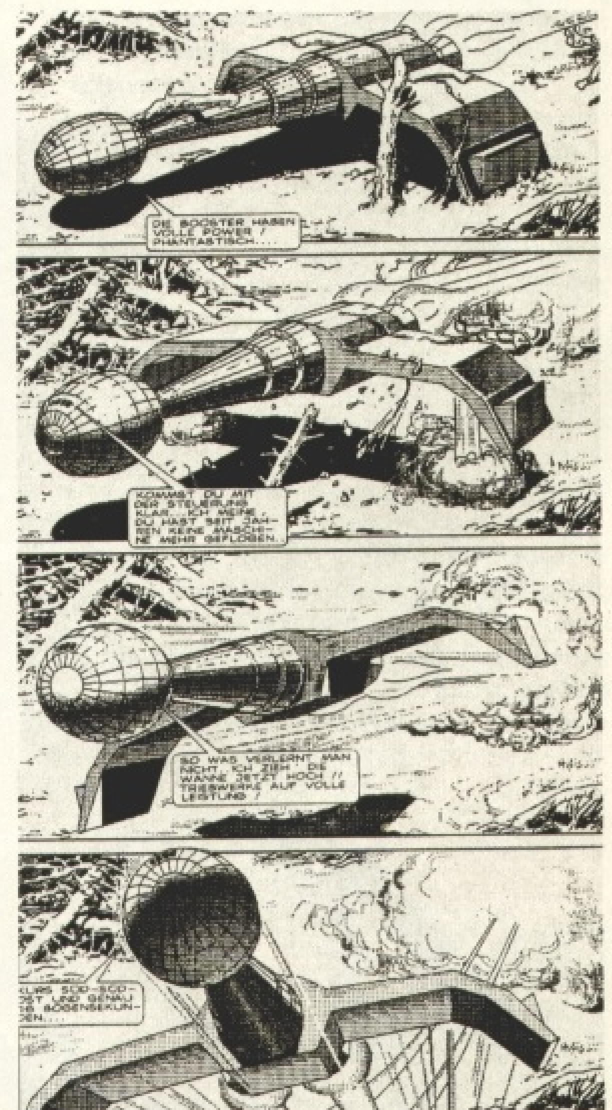
"I do look at **Viz** from time to time. What I like about it is one of things which always appealed to me about comics... there's something very democratic about it, that feeling that anybody could do it."

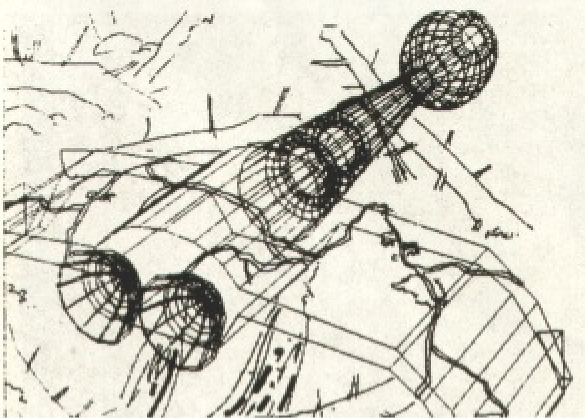
What's the most satisfying thing about producing comics?

"The beauty of comics, which is something doesn't apply to TV or movies, is that with something like **Watchmen** it was just Alan and me and John Higgins (the colourist). There wasn't anyone saying we can't do that shot because that's going to cost twice as much as if we set it up this way, or there's such a lot of money riding on this that I think we're going to have to cut that scene in case we alienate people. Comics are very much a personal vision.

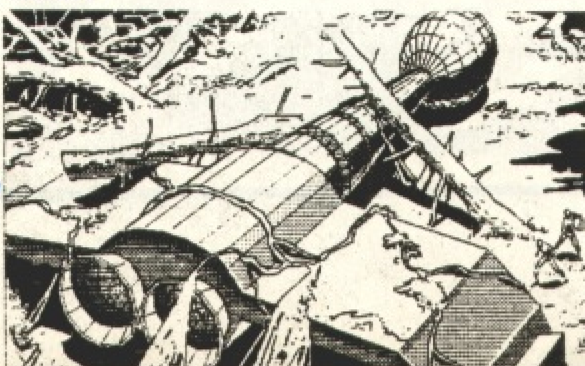
"One of the misconceptions about comics is that they are a written medium which is later illustrated, when in fact in the best comics it all happens at the point at which the words

This sequence from Das Robot Imperium shows how easily images can be manipulated to create different scenes.





An example of how a sketch was constructed... First the framework of the ship is produced, the construction lines are then erased and finally the detail added.



Comics produced on a computer are nothing new, but none so far have used the computer as much more than a gimmick. Michael Saenz and Beno Gillis' **Shatter** was the first computer comic. It appeared in June of 19895, with a story almost as lifeless as the computer on which the artwork was produced.

Michel Gotze's **Das Robot Imperium** on the other hand, is a more impressive work – the story is at best only marginally more enthralling than **Shatter's,** but here the use of a computer is not just an attempt to be different. It's been used as an creative tool.

Michel created most of his sketches on an Atari ST and using a 3D program he produced 'models' of scenery which could be enlarged or reduced and portrayed in any perspective or viewed from every conceivable angle. This inventive use of computers in the production of a comic strip is something which greatly appeals to Mr Gibbons.

"One of the implicit things with comic strips is continuity. You have to draw people, objects,

become pictures. It's the relationship between what's said and what's seen. There's a marvellous book by Will Eisner (who created the **Spirit**), called **Comics And Sequential Art,** and he shows you the same picture with the same word balloon but with a slightly different image...

"Another unique thing about comics is that you can read them at your own pace. There are things in **Watchmen** that you'd have missed if it was a film – even reading it you miss things the first time through, which was the intention, whereas in a movie all this detail could be a blue. Although I suppose it might get people to go back to see it again..."

That said, Watchmen is uncannily cinematic for a comic book.

"Yeah, I suppose so... With **Watchmen,** Alan and I would talk a great deal on the phone: Alan would run by what he had in mind and I would offer my embelishment and all the time I'd draw 'thumbnails' (rough sketches). By the time I got the script I knew what the page was going to look like.

"Another thing which added to **Watchmen** was a return to basics... keeping most of pictures the same shape and size so it became like watching the TV. The eye edits out the things that don't change. When you watch TV you get so involved that you don't notice the lamp or the damp stain on the wallpaper.

"It also meant that when you came to a frame which was even twice the normal size it struck you as a big one. Like the aftermath sequence in the final issue. We knew from the very beginning that we weren't going to have a full page picture until we got to that issue, just to emphasise the horror of it all.

"Most comics tend to talk at the top of their voice all the time, and not just with what's said... Dynamic angles and so on work for Jack Kirby (the infamous **Marvel** supremo) because the kind of stories he does are active with quiet highlights, whereas **Watchmen's** a quiet story with active highlights. What you have to do is keep it down a bit so you haven't reached the top of your volume before you want to."

Will the film will be worth shouting about?

"Alan and I have blown hot and cold about it. At one point we thought it's bound to be an action adventure film which we're going to be ashamed of so we don't care. But then when we heard that Sam Hamm was going to write the screenplay, and Alan and I had both seen his first draft of the Batman movie, which was great, so we thought 'Oh well, it could be all right.'

"Sam's simplified the story, as he had to, but I think he's done a very good job of it. The stuff about the pirate has gone and so has the stuff about the foties heroes... it's actually a completely different plot from the comic book, but it's got exactly the same flavour and attitude to things.

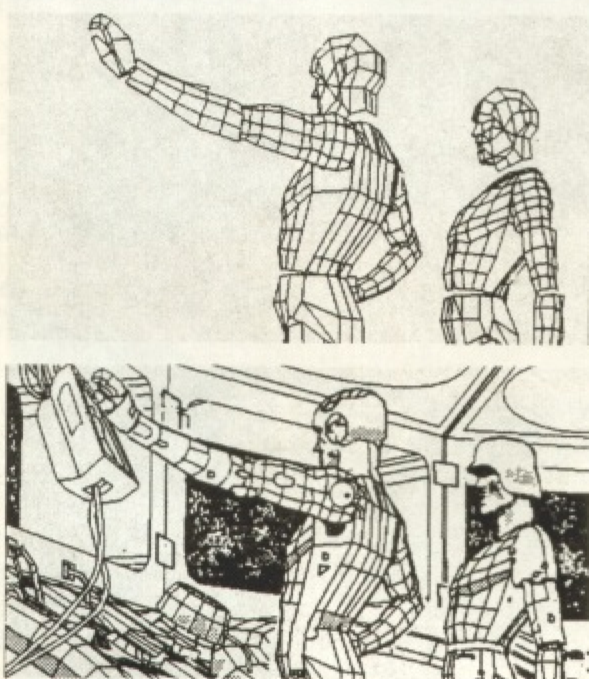
"Apart from the beginning, which I'd imagine had been imposed by the film studio. Most of us are familiar with the idea of superheroes, but they think the average movie-goer isn't, so the movie starts with 'The Watchman' in action – The Watchman is what they've called them, although we've strenuously tried to persuade them that they're not called The Watchmen. There isn't a group called The Watchmen. It's really a term of abuse...

"But I thought it was a first rate script. The characters have survived the transition intact. Well... they'd tried to cuten Rorschach up a bit. He should have no redeeming qualities. He isn't a loveable nutcase. He's a nutcase and that's it.

"The thing which really clinched it though



Doc Manhanttan: the most powerful superhero ever. "He isn't human – he's almost God. In the movie he has to look invisible almost, like he doesn't exist, which is how I tried to draw him. You probably noticed he doesn't cast a shadow..."

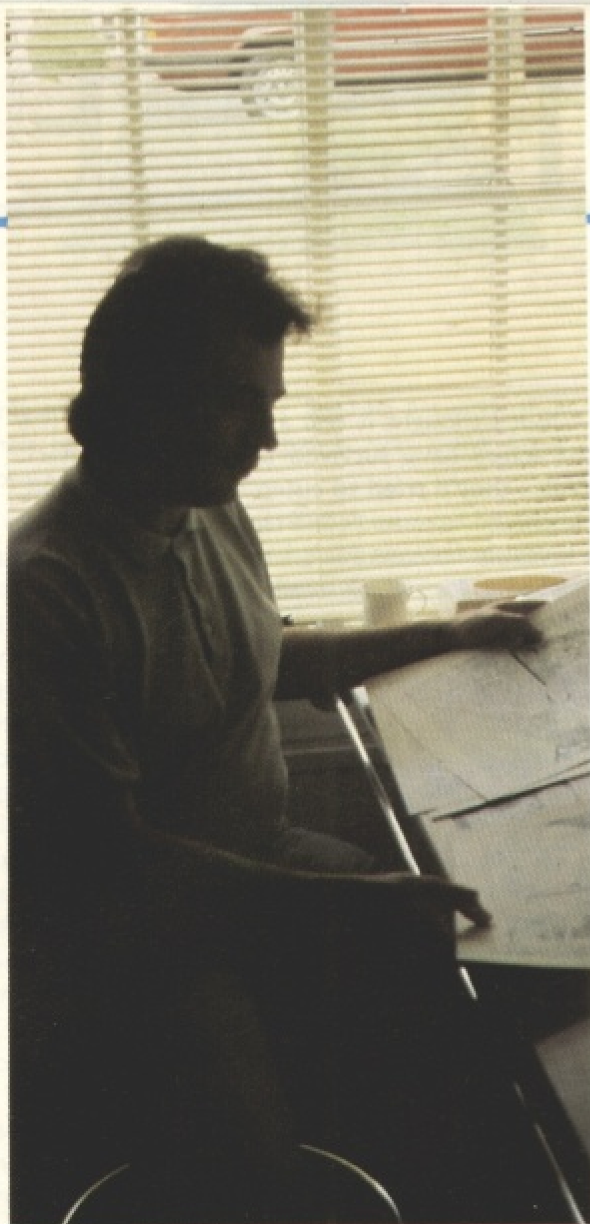


People were also drawn as skeletal frames and only filled in once a suitable posture was found. Only slight changes of gesture and features are necessary if the scene spreads across several frames. In fact, elements of other pictures can effortlessly be manipulated and merged to create a new image.

settings from several angles. A good example is the intersection in **Watchmen,** where you've got the news-vendor's stand and a hydrant and a restaurant and everything's got to stay in the same place and apparently – sometimes what's supposed to be realistic perspective isn't – be in relation to everything else.

"You have to perform a lot of mental manipulation, which means you tend to use 'stock' images. What is interesting is the facility to draw a three dimensional image from a plan or elevation and manipulate it on screen, rotate it and actually view it from angles that you probably wouldn't think of.

"What you've got to recognise though is that like anything else a computer is only a tool. When **Shatter** came out it was billed as the world's first computer comic, as if the fact that it was done on a computer made it any better. But it was obviously a very experimental thing to do."



was hearing that Terry Gilliam might be involved as Director. We thought "Wow, if anybody's going to make the film with us he's the man.'"

So what's next?

"The thing that I'm doing next with is a comic called **Liberty,** with Frank Miller. The lead character... one of her, ah... Her! what a giveaway... One of her qualities is that she's a child of the computer age and is very very good at hacking into computer systems. We touch upon what we think might be the possible interaction of man and computer in a slightly future age.

"We were very hesitant to talk in specifics about what **Watchmen** was about when it appeared, and in a way I'm very hesitant to talk specifically about what **Liberty** is about. If you said **Watchmen's** about retired superheroes, you'd think 'Oh, **Liberty** is about this girl who's good on computers...

"We've done a series of ads... you know like we did with **Watchmen** with those single images, like Rorschach saying 'I wish all the scum of the Earth had one throat and I had my hands about it' and you thought 'What's this about?' Well, we've got the same sort of thing with **Liberty**."

Come on then, what are these 'ads' like?

(adopting deep-voiced American TV presenter accent) "Liberty: An American Dream

"The first one's about sport. There's somebody dressed up in an American Football uniform, but it isn't – it's like a soldier's uniform, and he's running through the jungle and there's people firing at him...

"Next there's The Family. There's a room about the size of a phonebox, with three people in it, six inches away from a TV screen. And then there's Education. All that Education is, is a room full of computer screens with a kid in front of each one looking at an identical image...

"At one point you see Martha – that's her name: Martha Washington – you see her cheating at this quiz. The president at the time is Rexall and she's doing this test which says 'Which president passed this law...' and she presses A for Rexall. 'Which president this...' Rexall. And so on.

"She says 'just press Rexall every time, it'll get you at least a B. And just as she says that she gets a question wrong and the computer says: 'Your grade is C. So she says 'It doesn't always give you a B... but I can fix that.' And she hacks into the central computer and changes her grade.

"The teacher's watching over her shoulder and he says: 'I don't know Washington, I was five years older than you by the time I learned how to do that. You know, you're so clever in some ways but in other ways you're so stupid. I bet you don't even know which president crossed the Delaware...' And of course it's George Washington – and she goes 'Rexall?' It's a real nice little sequence. Education doesn't necessarily teach you anything, and the things that you do learn are the peripherals.

"**Liberty's** taken a long time but it hasn't been spent sat at the drawing board redoing things. We wanted to do something different. It's being published by Dark Horse, an independent publisher... a really nice bunch of people, and they're small and dedicated to making a really good job of it.

"It's rather interesting that as a creator you get a publisher to work for you, a bit like if you made records, whereas it always used to be that the companies had their characters and you were lucky to work on them. Now it's turn round and it's very much creator led. That's been a major difference in the industry and I think that's very encouraging for the future."

And on this happy note we took our leave of the chatty scribbler, still clutching his mouse and putting the finishing touches to a particularly crude snowman, who would be better suited to a fridge door than a mature graphic novel. Still it's early days yet – and if Mr Gibbons interest stays at this level, it may not be too long before the link between comics and computers becomes even closer.

A Dave Gibbons DPaint-drawn Rorschach. "The thing that's difficult about drawing Rorschach is trying not to make the blot look too much like a face."





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Veteran coder Andrew Braybrook parks himself in the Backspace hotseat to answer some criticism hurled at him through The One's Letters page...

I've been writing commercial games software for nearly six years now, and before that I wrote a number of COBOL games on an IBM mainframe in my spare time. The graphics modes on an IBM mainframe test-only monochrome terminal left something to be desired, so I left to concentrate on games full-time.

I started on the Dragon 32, writing in 6809 and converted three games, then I moved onto the C64 as the Dragon waned. That was a sad day as the 6809 is a great 8-bit chip to work with. I've now written seven games for the C64 and I don't honestly expect to write any more as I've finally moved on to 68000. I thought it would be nice to dabble in 6502 from time to time, but the demise of the 8-bit market, the frustration of cramming a quart into a pint-sized computer and the ease of coding 68000 put paid to that idea.

Over the last few months I have come across a vociferous minority of Amiga owners who are complaining vehemently about the quality of their software, mainly what they call ST port-overs. I think that their aim is off slightly as most British-produced 16-bit software is developed for both machines. In the early days of 16-bit, the ST took off quicker in this country so most software was produced for it and ported over much as an afterthought. I expect the programmers were quite surprised at how easy it was. Nowadays sales of games are about equal, and both are too low to warrant single development. In the US and Germany, where most non-UK software is originated, the ST has all but disappeared from the games market, so naturally their Amiga markets are larger, so they can afford to produce Amiga-only titles.

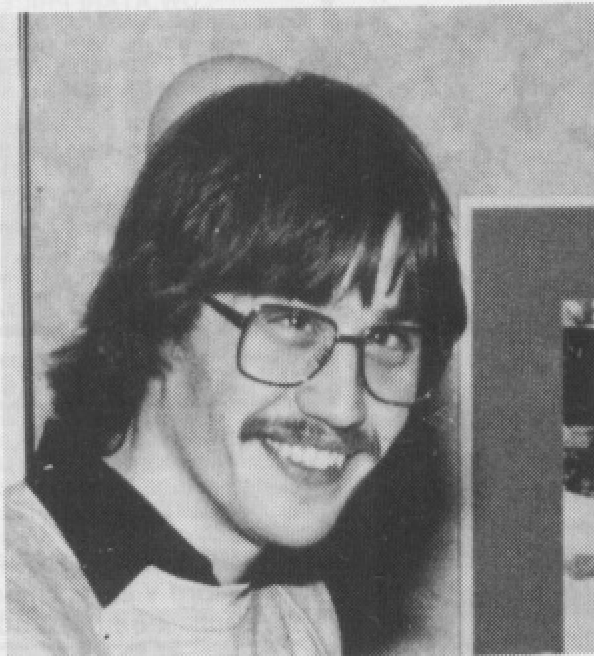
Now I have seen good and bad British software, much ported, and I have seen good and bad Amiga-only software. This I believe to be because although the standard of actual programming is very good across the board, similarly the standard of presentation, graphics and sound is excellent, but so much memory has been spent just trying to out-present all previous games that there isn't enough space left for what really matters, gameplay.

In my experience, over 40% of the space in the C64's 64K was dedicated to game code, but in the Amiga and ST the space left for code is about 15%.

Blowing vast quantities of in-game memory on sampled sound effects has got to be the biggest waste of space going. I'd like to sample my Rickenbacker 4001S bass guitar for future use, but to do it properly you need to sample each string as they have different tones. But then you can pluck each string near the front pickup for a bassier sound, or near the back for a more trebly sound, so we need eight samples. At 25K a throw that's 200K already.

The basic fact is that although samples are better quality than generated ones, they tend to have a limited frequency range and are often untidy at each end, and they get repetitive after a while. In **Rainbow Island** we got 18 instruments, 31 sound effects and the player to run them all in 15K, much less than one good sample. This gave us more space to spend on game-logic.

So, in conclusion, I don't think that port-overs from



the ST are particularly the problem, it's just that the standard of game design has fallen behind as a lot of the 68000 programmers are not games designers and too much machine space is being devoted to presentation, at the expense of gameplay. It is something of a sad situation that good presentation is mandatory to impress publishers and professional buyers who often will not actually play the game at all and you, yes YOU, the end-user are the first to discover that there is no gameplay.

So what's the answer? As with the music business, I think it's important to pay attention to who has written the software, not who has published it. After all, you don't go out and buy an album because it's on the Vertigo label, you buy it because it's by Rush. Don't buy games by authors who have produced bad games unless you've played them first, and do buy software by people you can trust. In the main, good authors want to be around in years to come, I know I do, so support them by buying their software in the knowledge that they're not going to rip you off. And don't rip us off by pirating software. I agree that £25 is too much for Amiga software, I'd like it cheaper too but pricing is not up to me. Piracy won't help. You hit the programmers worst because the programmers make the least money per unit despite having put the greatest individual effort in.

In response to Alan Johnstone's letter in your May '89 issue, I would just like to take the opportunity to clear up one or two matters regarding our **Rainbow Islands** project. Just to recap, we have converted the arcade original accurately to the ST and we are building an Amiga version from this, replacing routines and using the Amiga's capabilities where possible.

Mr Johnstone's argument is basically that the Amiga is miles better than the ST and therefore all Amiga versions of games should be written from scratch to ensure that this is clearly seen. Whilst agreeing that the Amiga has some superb hardware in it, especially in the sound department, it all depends what you are trying to achieve with a program as to whether the Amiga's hardware will be useful.

Clearly, smooth horizontal scrolling is useless when **Rainbow Islands** scrolls vertically only. A 32 colour background is useless when the arcade original has only a 16 colour background. Four 15 colour sprites 16 pixels wide multiplexed are useless when the game can run up to 60 objects on screen at once, each in 15 colours, some up to 56 pixels wide.

Basically the arcade machine has a considerably higher specification than the ST or the Amiga. Yet the game designers chose not to use many of the facilities offered by their hardware. Why? Because the game that they had designed works superbly using only a selection of the many possibilities available. They did not feel the need to run a multitude of special effects one after the other to try to impress the easily influenced. The game's strength lies in its gameplay.

In building an Amiga version, we obviously considered 32 colour mode for the graphics and concluded the following:

1) the two double-buffered screen would increase in size by 8K each for the fifth bit-plane,
2) the internal scroll-barrel screen would increase in size by 10K.
3) all plotted graphics would increase in size by 20%, from 110K for the resident sprites up to 132K, and from 60K to 72K for the largest island.
4) allocating a fifth bit-plane causes a 25% loss in performance of the CPU and/or blitter whilst bit-plane DMA fetching, about 16% performance loss overall.

Thus we realised that 20% of the graphics would have to be cut out to still fit in 512K, and the game would run slower having to plot the extra bit-plane for all graphics and backgrounds and due to performance loss. Having worked hard to get ALL the game features into the ST version I believe that we made the correct decision in keeping them all for the Amiga. It would have been nice to have about four extra colours but it's a small price to pay.

The next thing we came across is that the Amiga CPU runs at 7.16 MHz, against the ST's 8 MHz. Again a performance loss. This is to be offset by using the Amiga's blitter. Now first off, the blitter is not some all-powerful chip that does anything you want, yesterday, for free. It's faster than the Amiga's CPU at copying data and plotting into bit-planes, but it has to do a large amount of work to catch up with an ST's CPU doing the same job the hard way.

Overall, for **Rainbow Islands** at least, the Amiga and ST may thus be considered as very similar. The main differences that remain are that the sound on the Amiga will be better quality, and on four channels, and the game will be on one disk rather than two, so instead of one or two disk swaps per session, you won't need any.

The Amiga is certainly capable of some spectacular things, but it requires a task specifically designed for it. We have some ideas for designing games which do not need to scroll in all directions for the ST but may be more easily enhanced to do so on the Amiga to make use of it better.

As a programmer of both machines, I do not have any interest in the 'my-machine-is-better-than-yours' debate, unlike Mr Johnstone who, I suspect, is more worred that the ST version of **Rainbow Islands** will be as good as the Amiga version rather than the Amiga version being as bad as the ST one.

We have endeavoured to produce a close imitation of the arcade game with the emphasis on playability on all versions. I would urge everybody to simply judge the game on its own merits, whatever their machine, and buy it if they like it, I ask for nothing more.

FUN FROM DOWN UNDER THAT WILL HAVE YOU STANDING ON YOUR HEAD

